

RUNNING LATE
SCEPTICS DOUBT
TIMETABLE FOR
TUNNEL COPENHAGEN
BUSINESS EDITOR



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The hero bows out
— well, probably
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THE TIMES

No. 64,623

TUESDAY APRIL 20 1993

45p

No firefighting equipment on standby at cult compound as FBI launches attack

Inferno ends Waco siege

BY JAMES BONE
IN NEW YORK
AND RAY CLANCY

A BALL of flame last night engulfed the besieged cult compound at Waco, Texas, amid fears of a mass suicide prompted by an FBI bungling. The 51-day siege of the heavily fortified Branch Davidian headquarters came to an apocalyptic climax after US agents had tried to force its occupants out with tear gas and by smashing down compound building walls. The cult leader David Koresh and 95 followers, including 17 children and up to 26 Britons, had been holed up in the compound. A White House official at the FBI command centre in Washington reported that two cult members had started the fire. He said they were seen at the east and west ends by agents using high-powered rifle scopes. The official said about 20 people had left the compound and that federal agents were still pulling out others. Fanned by high winds, the fire burned out of control, throwing a dense plume of smoke over the prairie. Water to the compound had been turned off weeks ago to make it harder for the cult members to hold out. Witnesses said the fire raged out of control for

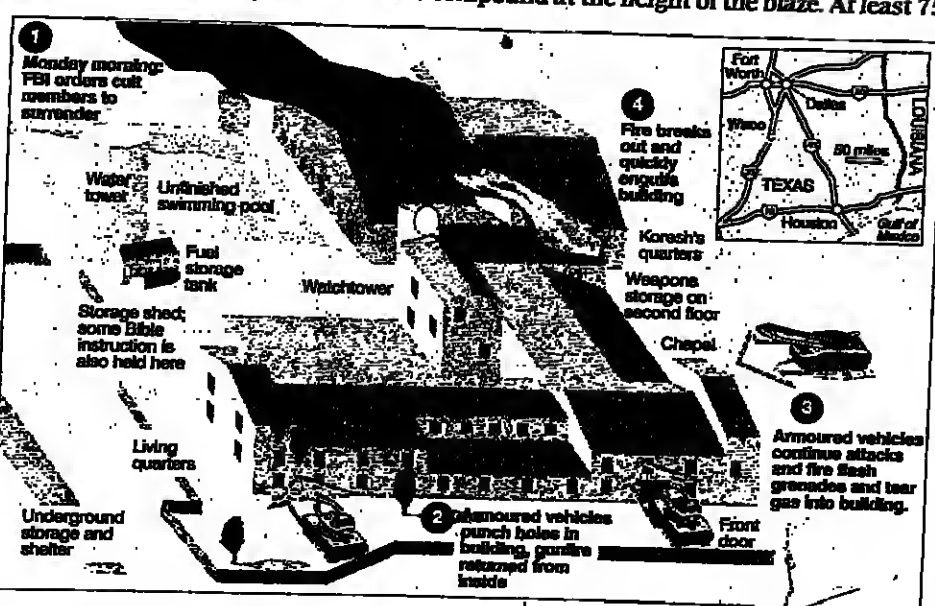


Texas apocalypse: flames and smoke billowing from the Waco compound at the height of the blaze. At least 75 people were believed to be still inside after 20 gave up

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more than an hour, burning down every building, before fire engines arrived. The White House said that President Clinton accepted responsibility for the FBI operation, but that the decision to move was made by the FBI and Justice Department. Bob Ricks, an FBI spokesman, said at a press briefing an hour before the fire broke out that the agency's plan was to use non-lethal, non-pyrotechnic CS gas to force the cult members to surrender. He said the operation began shortly before dawn when cult members, who have repeatedly broken promises to give themselves up, rejected a final demand that they surrender. Armoured vehicles with hydraulic battering rams punched holes in the buildings and began pumping non-lethal doses of tear gas inside. Cult members fired dozens of shots at the vehicles but the FBI did not shoot back and no injuries were reported before the fire broke out. The British embassy in Washington said that 17 of the Britons were women and

there was one child. Most of the group came from Nottingham, of Birmingham and some from Manchester. Many are former Seventh Day Adventists. Relatives in Britain watched in horror as live pictures of the disaster were shown on the BBC Six O'Clock News. They said that they had warned the authorities that Mr Koresh would never surrender. Samuel Henry, 56, of Old Trafford, Manchester, whose wife and five adult children were recruited into the cult, wept as he watched. "I am never going to see my family alive again. I am sure they are all dead in that building. I warned the authorities that this man Koresh had satanic powers and my worst fears have come true. "I blame the FBI for this tragedy. They have made a gross miscalculation. They should have had firefighters and emergency services standing by."



done so, because he and his men had to sleep. Other relatives prepared to fly out immediately to the United States. Late last night the Foreign Office was constantly monitoring the situation. David Hook, the British vice-consul from Houston, arrived at the scene to help any British people coming out of the compound. The 's' word at Waco began on February 28 when officials from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms tried to raid the compound in search of weapons. Cult members exchanged fire with the federal agents, killing four and injuring 16. Mr Koresh was lightly wounded in the hand and the side in the shoot-out, and at

least six of his followers were killed. Mr Koresh claimed that he could interpret the Seven Seals in the Book of Revelation and was thus the Lamb of God. In recent days, he had told authorities that he might be ready to surrender when he had finished a treatise on the Seven Seals. But despite claims that he had completed the fifth section, the FBI said yesterday that he had not even finished the first part. After weeks of waiting, the FBI assault was authorised by the US Attorney General Janet Reno. At 5.55am local time, the FBI telephoned Steve Schneider, an aide to Mr Koresh, and advised him that the agency would start injecting tear gas into the compound unless the cult members surrendered. Mr Schneiderman apparently threw the phone out of the room, breaking the connection, and the assault began. An M-60 combat engineering vehicle with a long hydraulic boom moved to the south-west side of the compound, where it was met with a volley of gunfire of around 75-80 rounds.

Fighting in Bosnia takes a sinister new twist

BY EYE-ANN PRENTICE

THE war in Bosnia took a sinister twist yesterday, with fighting between the republic's Muslims and Croats convulsing its centre. The battles, which are threatening vital aid supply-lines, coincided with growing Russian anxiety about the West's role in the war. The Croat-Muslim clashes also came as a ceasefire appeared to be holding in the Serb-besieged town of Srebrenica, where evacuations of the wounded continued yesterday. Andrei Kozyrev, the Russian foreign minister, called for a final effort to secure peace in Bosnia, saying that failure could lead to all-out war in the Balkans. He proposed a UN Security Council meeting in Srebrenica or the Bosnian capital, Sarajevo. He also voiced unease at the United Nations vote to tighten sanctions against Serb-led Yugoslavia. President Yeltsin's Balkan envoy, Vitali Churkin, called the UN vote "hasty". He added: "Everybody's hand has been weakened by the vote in the security council." He also criticised Western calls for selective air strikes to halt the advance of Serbian forces in Bosnia. Britain has underlined its reluctance to become embroiled in military action in Bosnia in the face of the growing public clamour for tougher action against the Serbs. After a two-hour review of the options by a cabinet committee chaired by the prime minister, Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, held firm in the Commons against demands for air strikes against Serbian targets and the lifting of the UN embargo. Continued on page 2, col 4

Blast in camp, page 11
Parliament, page 8
Military options, page 16

Six die as violence marks South African funeral

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN
IN JOHANNESBURG

AT LEAST six people died yesterday in violence that marked the funeral in Johannesburg of Chris Hani, the assassinated general secretary of the South African Communist Party. More than a hundred thousand mourners, mostly peaceful but many carrying axes, spears and pangas, took part in ceremonies and 14,000 uniformed African National Congress marshals proved unable to control the most violent. About 10,000 mourners at

tended the burial at South Park cemetery in Germiston, just east of Johannesburg, where white doves released by Mr Hani's daughters flew into his open grave as gunfire ripped through the afternoon air. A 21-gun salute encouraged others to produce AK47s, pistols and shotguns and fire their own tribute. An order from Tokyo Serwale, leader of the local region of the ANC and Mr Hani's friend and neighbour, wearing the camouflage uniform of an Umkhonto we Sizwe officer, brought the firing to an end. Near by mourners visiting

the suburb where Mr Hani lived looted the homes of his white neighbours. The body of a black man was found near by. Cyril Ramaphosa, the ANC secretary general, had urged people not to go there. Across Johannesburg, the ANC president Nelson Mandela addressed a vast crowd in the First National Bank stadium, urging the formation of peace brigades in Mr Hani's honour. As he spoke a pall of smoke rose outside the stadium where mine houses had been torched. Two bodies were later found in the houses. Outside the stadium young

men fought a running battle with police and soldiers. The soldiers fired tear smoke at the crowd, which seemed to want to break into the adjoining national exhibition centre. A group of journalists, including two women, were caught in a hail of stones. Foreign and local peace monitors watched helplessly as young men, often chanting the Pan Africanist Congress slogan "one settler, one bullet", made petrol bombs which they used to torch a police armoured vehicle. An embarrassed monitor from the local peace committee said: "When we went over

there they just said 'We want no peace'. Inside the stadium the service, led by the Most Rev Desmond Tutu, the Archbishop of Cape Town, proceeded smoothly. Mr Hani's body was placed in front of a podium while the band of Umkhonto we Sizwe played *Abide with Me* and the crowd in the stadium, which was filled to overflowing, stood silently. The crowd then sang *Nkosi Sikelel' Afrika* (God bless Africa), the ANC's national anthem. ANC's new heart, page 10
Leading article, page 19

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By BEN PRESTON, EDUCATION REPORTER

The move came as Sir Ron Dearing, in his first day as chairman designate of the authority, appealed to teachers to implement the tests and

Court ruling that action by the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers is lawful.

Letters, page 19

BY NICHOLAS WATT

Powell supporting his speech.
Writing in today's *Times* Mr Powell defends his forecast of a rising ethnic population. But Lord Hailsham of Saint Marylebone who, as Quintin Hogg, was the shadow home secretary in April 1968, said yesterday that he was disgust-



loyalty to his colleagues," he said. "If I had known about it I would have vetoed it. After that I never trusted him again and it ruined his career."

Lord Healey, who was defence secretary at the time, said he was "stupefied" by the speech. "I thought it was bound to increase racist feelings, as it did," he said. "It was grossly dishonest and shameful. It was wholly negative and the only people to take it seriously were the National Front. We did not have the rivers of blood 'he talked

One of Britain's leading Asians said yesterday that Mr Powell had been proved "totally wrong" in predicting racial tension. Bhikhu Parekh, professor of politics at Hull University, said: "We have had no more race riots than anywhere else. Ethnic minorities are not only keen to integrate but have done so successfully."

Powell looks back, page 18

BY PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

BRITISH Rail last night was on the verge of a settlement with the train drivers' union Aslef which could avoid further drivers' strikes over privatisation. But more strikes by members of the largest rail union, the RMT, could still hit rail travellers in a separate dispute over jobs.

with BR yesterday. Derrick Fullick, general secretary of Aslef, said he was very hopeful that another strike could be avoided. Aslef members went on strike last Friday in a pre-privatisation dispute.

Paul Watkinson, BR personnel director, said the talks had been very satisfactory. Leaders of Aslef met in London last night to consider BR's proposals.

However, BR urged the

main rail union, the Rail, Maritime and Transport union, to pull back from further strikes and show "flexibility" in resolving its dispute over jobs. RMT members also went on strike last Friday, for the second time in a fortnight. In a letter to the union, which was still meeting last night, BR said it had gone as far as it could to meet union demands for a guarantee against compulsory redundancies.

Continued from page 1
Nations embargo against supplying arms to the Bosnian Muslims.

about 480 people had been airlifted out of Srebrenica by late afternoon.

Mr Hurd deliberately left open the door to the possibility of a stronger military response if Britain's preferred option of an economic blockade on Serbia fails.

America has said it will put strong pressure on its European allies to agree to lift the arms embargo against Bosnia's Muslims and bomb Serbian targets.

The Croat-Muslim clashes spread yesterday from Vitez, where hundreds of British UN troops are based, to Kiseljak just outside Sarajevo. Mortar attacks and artillery fire resounded around the town after a day of heavy shelling. "There are no roost definitely fierce battle taking place between the two sides," said Lieutenant-Colonel Bob Stew-

"The president has made it clear we're going to try to press the allies to move forward," said Dee Dee Myers, the White House spokeswoman.

White House spokeswoman. British sources acknowledged that President Clinton raised both options during a 50-minute telephone conversation with John Major on Sunday, but sought to play down the idea that the US was trying to coerce Britain into action.

The fight between nominal-
ly allied Bosnian Croats and
Muslims, the fourth armed
conflict in the former Yugosla-
via, is likely to relegate the
struggle between the Bosnian
Serbs to the rear.

With the battle for
Srebrenica all but over, the
fight for towns such as Vitez,
Travnik and Kiseljak is only
just beginning.

The Srebrenica airlift was resumed yesterday, a day after UN peacekeepers arrived in the war-scarred Muslim enclave and its beleaguered defenders signed a truce that amounted to a virtual surrender of the town.

Peter Kessler of the UN High Commission for Refugees in Sarajevo said that



Stewart: soldiers have seen up to 70 bodies

an. commander of the British battalion battle group in Bosnia, from Vitez. "We estimate that our soldiers have seen between 60 and 70 bodies, but there could be more," he said in an interview with the BBC.

The fighting in Vitez is much more serious than any previous flare-ups between Bosnian Croats and Muslim forces as each side struggles to take control of central Bosnia.

Soldiers are using multi-barrelled rocket launchers and large calibre mortars. British UN troops have also reported seeing tanks being destroyed.

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE BBC yesterday launched an ambitious attempt to find out what its employees think of its output, management and future development as part of an extensive consultation exercise.

Questionnaires have been issued to a third of the 24,500 employees, selected randomly from the director general down to receptionists and cleaners, to canvass their opinions on a range of subjects.

The completed questionnaires, which will be anonymous and confidential, will be assessed by external consultants and will be included in the BBC's final response, expected this year, to the government's Green Paper on the future of the corporation. This is the first time the BBC has attempted formally to assess the mood of its workforce since the dispute over the tax arrangements of John Birt, the BBC director general, which was fuelled largely by anonymous complaints from within the corporation.

Launching the survey, Pamela Taylor, the BBC's director of corporate affairs, acknowledged the need for a greater understanding of staff views. The questionnaire is part of an exercise launched in the run-up to the renewal of the BBC's charter in 1996.

In the past three months, more than 6,000 licence payers have had the opportunity to put forward their views on the BBC and to question senior staff at a series of 47 public meetings and seminars held throughout the country.

A man died and another was seriously injured when a trailer broke free and rolled into them at Wearmouth colliery in Sunderland. The incident was the second fatal accident underground at the mine in just over a year. It happened 800ft below ground, close to the far end of a shaft that reaches seven miles out under the North Sea. The pit will be the last remaining colliery in the Durham coalfield after the next round of mine closures in May.

Miners at the scene fought to free the trapped workers and doctors went below ground to assist. One miner, Syd Benson, 36, said: "Nearly the full shift was there trying to get them out. It was coming towards the end of the shift and most men were preparing to come back to the surface." British Coal said the men were contract workers doing maintenance. In February last year two men died and three were hurt in the mine when a locomotive came off its track.

The relatives of Eddie Hale, a West Belfast petty criminal who was shot dead by undercover soldiers more than three years ago, were dismayed yesterday when police sent him a summons to attend his own inquest. A spokesman for the RUC later blamed human error. Hale and two accomplices were carrying replica weapons when they were shot in 1990 during a raid on a betting shop. The inquest, which resumes today, has been told that soldiers will give evidence from behind screens to protect their identities.

A croupier won the maximum £10,000 compensation yesterday after being constantly sexually harassed. Jahma Jung, 25, said Colin Mather, her dealing inspector at the Park Towers casino, in Knightsbridge, central London, repeatedly touched her bottom. When she complained she was sacked. Croydon industrial tribunal was told.

The return of the name Great Western to the railways after nearly 50 years was signalled by John MacGregor, right, the transport secretary, in the Commons yesterday. Giving details of his plans for franchising services to private operators, he said: "Great Western InterCity is one of the seven service groups that I have asked BR to prepare for early franchising."



Scientists have for the first time transmitted the incurable "mad cow" disease, bovine spongiform encephalopathy, (BSE) to primates, which belong to the same order of mammals as humans. Infected tissue from the brains of cattle was injected directly into the brains and abdominal cavities of two healthy marmoset monkeys, which showed symptoms of the disease after 46 months. Researchers say the findings are reassuring because they show it is harder to transmit the disease to primates than to other species.

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AVAILABLE UNTIL 16TH MAY

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

A RACE from London to New York, in which celebrity contestants will cover the entire distance on land, is to be mounted by ITV..

Timothy Dalton, best known for his portrayal of James Bond, will take part in *The Big Race*, which will take drivers through the Channel tunnel and across Russia to America by way of the ice flows of the Bering Strait.

Hunt, the racing drivers, have been approached to take part in the televised challenge, which will pit two teams against each other — one driving from London to New York and the other racing in the opposite direction.

The teams will devise their own routes for the seven-week drive and will have to make their own arrangements for fuel dumps, food supplies and accommodation.

The Big Race is being organised by Central Independent Television in associ-

ation with the East-West Creative Association, an independent body which helps Western film-makers work in the CIS and the Baltic states. The association will provide a full range of production services and has already secured special filming permission from the countries through which the race will pass.

Drivers will have to modify their vehicles to cope with a range of driving conditions, including winter trails and ice roads through snow-covered valleys.

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Cancer charity says doctors undermine teenage patients

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

HOSPITALS are undermining the recovery of teenage cancer patients by failing to recognise their emotional needs, a cancer charity said yesterday. Doctors and nurses did not talk to young patients frankly and families tried to cocoon them from reality.

Professor Robert Souhami, head of a teenage cancer unit at the Middlesex Hospital, London, said that caring for teenagers alongside toddlers and babies on paediatric wards, or next to septuagenarians on adult wards, could undermine their optimism and resolve.

Launching a telephone helpline for patients and their families run by Cancerlink, an arm of the Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund, he said that recognising teenagers' needs had lagged behind dramatic advances in treatment that cured six out of ten cases.

Margaret Evans, a Macmillan lecturer at Southampton General Hospital, said that it was essential to treat teenage sufferers as equals and to talk to them honestly. More than 2,000 teenagers have the disease, which is the second most common cause of death in their age group after accidents.

Sharon Tibble, 19, who contracted bone cancer at the base of her spine four years ago, said that her greatest

need was for contact with other teenagers going through the same ordeal. "Parents do tend to wrap you up in cotton wool. If the helpline had existed then, it would have been very helpful." While receiving chemotherapy her weight fell from 8 stone to 5½ stone because the drugs made her vomit and her hair fell out.

"I was frightened to eat or drink because I was throwing up all the time. In the end they had to feed me intravenously."

Niki Winnard was 14 when a brain tumour was diagnosed five years ago. In 1991, after radiotherapy had failed, she had brain surgery in which 85 per cent of the tumour was removed. Within three months it had grown back to twice its original size and she was given two weeks to live. "I went out and bought a bottle of Marks and Sparks sherry. I thought, if I'm going to go I might as well enjoy it."

Two years later the cancer has left her almost blind but otherwise well and she is running her own helpline, Help Adolescents With Cancer (HAWC), from her parents' home. "I think I was arrogant. I have always had this sense of happiness," she said. Her mother Hilda said that Niki's doctors did not know how she had survived. The free Macmillan helpline, called Macline, is on

0800 S91028 from 9.30am to 5pm on weekdays and to 7pm on Mondays and Thursdays. HAWC is on 061 688 6244.

Children with asthma suffer unnecessarily because their condition is not properly controlled, according to a survey by Action Asthma, a group of British doctors (Nigel Hawkes writes).

Responses to 20,000 questionnaires showed that a quarter of sufferers had symptoms every day or most days. Two thirds had days off school or missed games. Forty three per cent panicked when their asthma was at its worst and a quarter had visited hospital during the previous year because of a bad attack.

The group's chairman, Dr Bill Holmes, said: "The way forward lies in educating patients, parents, nurses and doctors about asthma and raising expectations of what can be achieved."

Body and mind, page 17



The spirit of charity: Edward, aged seven months, gets to grips with the gavel at the launch of a sale of rare wines and spirits to raise money for the Tommy's campaign charity for research into medical complications during childbirth, which was held at Sotheby's auction house yesterday

Girl is given liver-bowel transplant

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

A BIRMINGHAM hospital has performed the same operation on a 2½-year-old girl as that which saved the life of Laura Davies, who travelled to America for her treatment.

Last night, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital said that the unnamed patient was in a critical but stable condition.

She was given a liver and small bowel transplant in an eight-hour operation on Saturday. The only other attempt at the operation in Britain was at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge in 1988, but the recipient, a man, died a few days later.

The two surgeons involved in the Birmingham operation, John Buckels and David Meyer, had flown to Pittsburgh to consult the doctors who treated Laura Davies. Mr Buckels said yesterday: "We are satisfied with the way the liver is working so far." Ivan Ladd, 52, was yesterday back at work in Wroughton, Wiltshire, 18 days after undergoing a heart transplant. He believes he may hold the record for the shortest stay in hospital after such an operation.



Shared line: Sharon Tibble and Margaret Evans

Jail privatisation official moves to Strangeways firm

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

A SECOND senior civil servant involved in preparing detailed plans for privatising prisons has been poached by the private sector to join a company bidding for the contract to run Strangeways jail in Manchester.

The departure of the second in charge of the remand contract unit has raised fears among opposition MPs and penal reform groups of a conflict of interest in the prison privatisation programme.

David Sherwood's unit draws up the conditions to be met by private firms bidding for business in the penal system. His predecessor, Charles Erickson, left to join Group 4 as director of remand

service rules designed to stop conflicts of interest and prevent private companies gaining an unfair advantage in the awarding of contracts. The Cabinet Office has the power to delay his move to Mancare for up to two years.

Last night Tony Blair, the shadow home secretary, expressed disquiet at the latest departure. "I am concerned to see if there is any potential conflict of interest and will be asking questions of the home secretary," he said.

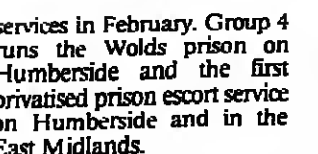
Mancare, a subsidiary of the Sodexho corporation based in Warrington, Cheshire, is one of six private sector companies that last week put in bids to run Strangeways. No one from the company was available to comment yesterday but last week Chris Carroll, a company spokesman, said it had recruited someone to be the governor of Strangeways in the event of the firm winning the contract.

Mr Sherwood was involved in drawing up the conditions demanded by the government for the running of Blakenhurst, but it is not known whether his duties involved specification for Strangeways, which has undergone a £63 million refurbishment since being almost destroyed in the worst prison riot in British penal history.

Officials in the prison service said they had not been surprised at his departure because greater private sector involvement in the penal system would result in more movement between the public service and private companies.

Sodexho is a French service company with a £1 billion turnover that employs 48,000 people in 40 countries. It claims to be the third largest contract caterer in the world and has designed, built and provides services for 3,500 inmates in five French prisons. It set up its UK subsidiary a few weeks ago.

Mr Sherwood's decision to leave the public sector prison service is the latest departure to the private sector: United Kingdom Detention Services has appointed David Brookes, a senior governor who was attached to the prison service inspectorate, to be director of Blakenhurst.



Blair: questions over conflicts of interest

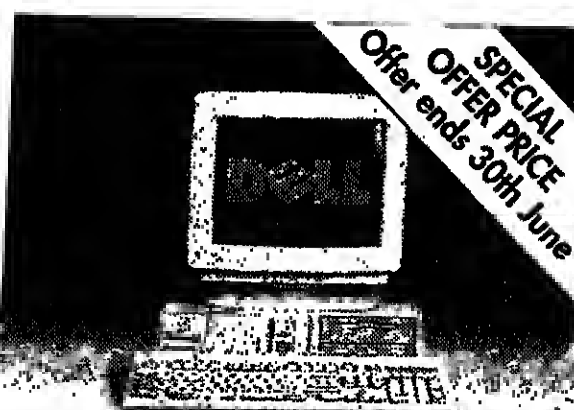
services in February. Group 4 runs the Wolds prison on Humberside and the first privatised prison escort service on Humberside and in the East Midlands.

In another move, Peter Siddons, governor at Grendon jail near Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, is to join United Kingdom Detention Services, which is to run Blakenhurst prison at Redditch, Hereford and Worcester, as head of inmate activities at the jail.

Mr Sherwood ended his duties with the remand contract unit last week after accepting a job with Mancare, a subsidiary of a French company. A prison service spokesman said yesterday: "Mr Sherwood is no longer working with the remand contract unit. He was taken off that work when he informed us that he was going to move to the private firm."

His case is to be referred to the Cabinet Office under civil

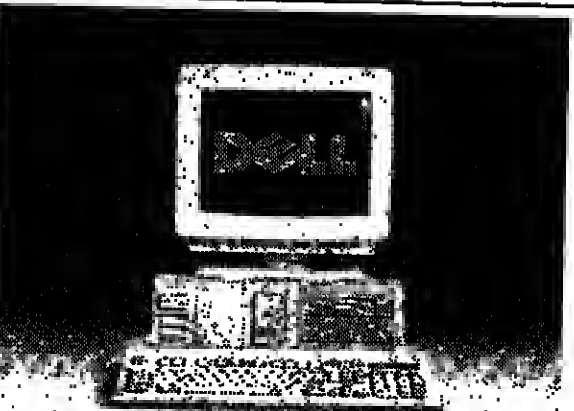
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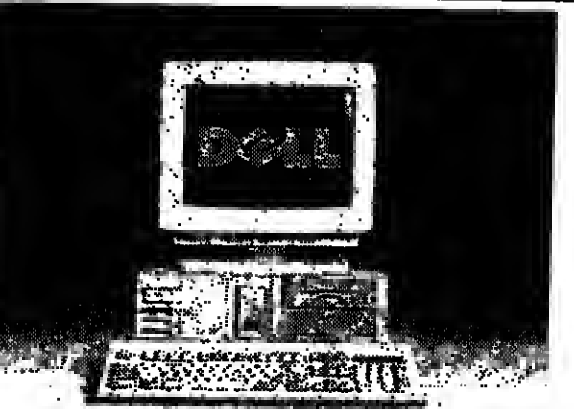
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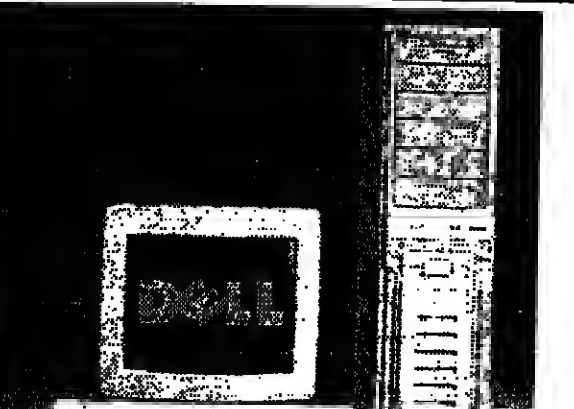
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TI S5

Owner of wound-up chauffeur agency starts new business

BY ANGELA MACKAY

AN EXCLUSIVE staffing agency whose clients include Michael Heseltine, Dame Shirley Porter, King Constantine and Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber has been wound up with debts of about £100,000.

Anne Marie Andreae-Jones, the owner of Jeeves Chauffeur Agency and wife of a judge, has already restarted trading as Belgravia Bureau International. That company was formed four weeks ago, just ten days after her former agency was struck off the companies register. The premises have moved from Brompton Road in Knightsbridge, central London, around the corner to a small above-street office in Hans Crescent where Belgravia Bureau is conducting business despite not being licensed by the employment department.

Jeeves Chauffeur Agency provided butlers, cooks, housekeepers, chauffeurs and nannies to royalty, rock stars, industrialists, politicians and the aristocracy. Jeeves' clients have included Rocco Forte, chief executive of the eponymous hotel group; Anouska Hempel, the designer, and Lord Weinstock, managing director of GEC.

The Official Receiver is wading through the company's finances. Jeeves Chauffeur Agency is also being investigated by the Inland Revenue and the DSS contributions agency. HM Customs and Excise successfully petitioned to have the company struck off the register after it failed to pay outstand-

The polished veneer of life downstairs has been disturbed by the collapse of one of London's most posh butler agencies

ing VAT of £20,000. Other creditors include ex-staff and Yellow Pages.

Former office staff told *The Times* that the telephone and electricity had been disconnected after bills went unpaid, that their wages were frequently late and that their pay cheques sometimes bounced. At least once, staff were paid by the personal cheque of Mrs Andreae-Jones's husband, William Andreae-Jones QC, a Crown Court recorder since 1982, after a Jeeves Chauffeur cheque was dishonoured.

The agency always managed, however, to maintain its upper crust image. One former employee in the office said "It was a very posh agency, full of Sloane types."

Inland Revenue and the DSS became involved about 12 months ago after some of Jeeves' office staff became concerned that the Revenue had not been receiving their contributions. The DSS's contribution agency intervened after staff found that their national insurance contributions had not been made.

Jani Phillips, a member of Jeeves' staff for two years until March 1992, was awarded almost £7,000 by an industrial tribunal which ruled that she had been unfairly dismissed partly because of her "correspondence with the DSS over the non-payment by (Jeeves) of her national insurance contri-

butions during her period of employment", according to the tribunal ruling.

Mrs Phillips said: "I was gobsmacked when I was made redundant. I was the most successful person in the office."

Jeeves Chauffeur's problems started four years ago when Adler Shine & Co, the company's accountants at the time, qualified the accounts for the year ended 31 March 1989, which were also the last to be filed at Companies House.

Adler Shine said it had to accept assurances from Mrs Andreae-Jones that all the company's transactions were reflected in the records. It criticised the company for not having a reliable system of invoicing. The accountants also said that Jeeves had advanced loans totalling £126,948 to Mrs Andreae-Jones in violation of the Companies Act.

That year, Jeeves Chauffeur turned over £339,102 and showed a pre-tax profit of £59,049 after administrative expenses of £273,111. According to the accounts, £160,009 of the expenses were wages, salaries and social security costs and Mrs Andreae-Jones paid herself £20,000.

Jeeves Chauffeur is not the first company controlled by Mrs Andreae-Jones to be struck off the register. In March last year, Belgravia Bureau (London) Ltd was also wound-up.

Ian Davis, her solicitor, said: "I must say that we strongly denied at the tribunal that this woman (Mrs Phillips) was selected for redundancy because of her correspondence with the DSS although I accept that the tribunal found against us. We did lodge an appeal against the tribunal decision but as the Jeeves Chauffeur Agency is now in liquidation there was no point in pursuing it."

"I can say that I have been instructed to apply for a new licence from the Department of Employment and am in the process of doing so. I think it is extremely unfortunate. The situation in which she finds herself is not entirely, I believe, of her own making."



Sir Andrew, client of Jeeves Chauffeur Agency



Dame Shirley, supplied with domestic help

Sex show too tame for Swedes

BY ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

SWEDISH television executives have refused to show ITV's controversial but critically acclaimed sex education programme *The Good Sex Guide* because it is "not naughty enough".

The series broke new ground when it was shown in Britain in January because of its light-hearted and explicit approach. It was sold this week to Finnish and Danish television at the MIP international television sales fair in Cannes, France. But Swedish programmers dismissed it as tame and boring.

A spokesman from TV4,

Sweden's main commercial station, said that the £700,000 series was too similar to the kind of programmes seen at school. "Swedish viewers are a lot more advanced and this programme is beneath them. It is far too tame," he said.

Programme makers at Carlton Television, which commissioned the series for the ITV network, said they still intended to commission a new series. Paul Corley, Carlton's controller of factual programmes, said: "However advanced in this sort of thing the Swedes think they are, the programme's success in Brit-

ain has convinced us there is a demand for a new series."

□ An episode of *The New Statesman* has upset the Germans after it was picked as an entrant for the "TV Oscars" at Mootreux. The episode, *Heil and Farewell*, features Rick Mayall as the politician Alan B'Stard who has bought Hitler's genitalia pickled in a jar.

A German broadcasting spokesman said: "It might be funny in Britain but it is rather insensitive because of the rise of neo-fascism in Germany." Yorkshire Television, which made the show, said: "It was not intended to cause offence."

Unveiling of 'the rusty lump' deals blow to civic pride

NEWSTEAM



Big trouble: the statue of Iron-Man looms over Queen Victoria

Brummies struggle with metal fatigue

BY ALISON ROBERTS
ARTS REPORTER

QUEEN Victoria wears a haughty face and looks away. Local residents call it "the rusty lump". Controversial is too mild a word for Birmingham's newest piece of public art, which was officially presented to the world yesterday.

Iron-Man is a 20ft iron body case, cast in four sections and embedded in the ground up to its ankles. As a visitor walks up New Street, it dominates the partly restored glory of Victoria Square in the city centre. Despite leaning 7.5 degrees backwards and five degrees to its left, it overshadows the square's smaller, upright statue of Queen Victoria.

Even the Public Art Commissions Agency, which organised the sculpture, calls the arrangement "an extraordinary juxtaposition".

Commissioned by the TSB, Anthony Gormley, the sculptor, says his £100,000 work "is rooted in the traditions of labour of Birmingham and the Black Country and is a celebration of the power of that tradition".

The strength of feeling aroused by *Iron-Man* has mobilised protest, and support from all quarters of Birmingham. As shoppers gathered around the new work, Les Wallis spoke for the majority. "It ruins the square. The TSB must have been off their head to pay for this. I can't see what it means or the method to it," said the pensioner.

Samantha Taylor, whose pride in her city overcame aesthetic concerns, replied: "But at least it makes you stop. It provokes a reaction, like all community art in Birmingham."

In a city where conservation is a point of pride, Rose Arturs summed up the strength of feeling over *Iron-Man*. "It makes us a bit of a laughing stock."

'Suspicious' man held near palace

A motorist was arrested early yesterday after he was seen near the gates of the Princess of Wales's London home for the second time in a week.

Officers gave chase after the 33-year-old man realised he had been seen near the gates of Kensington Palace and drove away. He was stopped near by, outside the Royal Albert Hall.

It is understood the motorist, who was arrested for breach of the peace and driving under the influence of drugs, was the same man held by police in the grounds of the palace in the early hours of last Tuesday. He was bailed to reappear at Kensington police station in July.

Widow of 91 attacked in bed

A 91-year-old widow, partially deaf and blind, was indecently assaulted in her bed at sheltered accommodation in Paddington, west London.

Police said that the woman was asleep when a man climbed through an open window, tried to rape her and fled with a few pounds.

Car wrecked

A police car was written off and two others damaged after being rammed during a chase through Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, involving a stolen Audi car. Youths of 15 and 16 were charged after the incident. The first was allowed bail and the second was remanded in custody.

Death charge

A man and a woman were arrested yesterday by police investigating the death of Miss Nancy Joyce, 82, who was dragged for 100 yards under a car in Walworth, south London, on Saturday. The car driver and his woman passenger ran off after the incident.

Body remand

Conor Downey, 24, unemployed, of Woking, Surrey, was remanded in custody by Brent magistrates yesterday charged with the 1988 murder of an unidentified woman whose body was dismembered and dumped in plastic bags in Limehouse, east London.

Driver held

Joseph Thomas Fitzpatrick, 24, a gas fitter, of Levenshulme, Manchester, was remanded in custody by Northwich magistrates charged with causing death by dangerous driving after two men were killed at Lostock Gt. near Northwich.

Top papers

The *Manchester Evening News* was named regional newspaper of the year in the UK Press Gazette Awards. Weekly newspapers of the year (over and under 20,000 circulation) were the *Bucks Free Press* and the *Stockport Express/Advertiser*.

Dead named

Three people killed in a road accident near Welshpool, Powys, at the weekend were named as Dudley Hodges, 43, his mother-in-law Dorothy Williams, 75, both of King's Norton, Birmingham, and Glynn Jones, 38, of Worcester, Shropshire.

Meadow move

A meadow at Portishead near Bristol is being moved 400 yards to save rare grasses and wild flowers from the bulldozer. The field is the site of Avon and Somerset police's new training school.

Fair cop

The mayor of Erewash, Derbyshire, Kathleen Trueman, was made an honorary police officer in thanks for her council's support for the force.

Rare sight

Twitwits flocked to Copeland Island near Bangor, Co. Down, to see a White's thrush normally confined to Asia.

Freed pets put wildlife in danger

BY NICK NUTTALL

BRITAIN'S native creatures are being put at risk by bored pet owners who are flouting the law and dumping unwanted foreign animals in gardens and the countryside.

Researchers from Surrey Wildlife Trust found a wide range of exotic species in the county's waterways and gardens, including large carnivorous American bullfrogs, Alpine newts and yellow bellied toads. The American frogs can grow up to 6in long and sometimes eat mice, snakes and small birds.

The trust said that its survey endorsed the findings of other groups around the country. Julia Wycheley, the trust's amphibian and reptile recorder, said the survey had unearthed other alien species including red-eared terrapins, tree frogs from West Africa and Italian newts.

Dr Tong Gent, reptile and amphibian ecologist at English Nature, the government's wildlife advisers, said yesterday there was always the risk that alien creatures might carry disease or could undermine the future for native species by breeding with them. "There is evidence that Italian crested newts are breeding with our native crested newt." The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 makes it illegal for people to release alien plant and animal species into the wild. While some find Britain too cold or inhospitable, history is littered with cases in which exotic creatures have taken hold. The rabbit, for example, was introduced by the Normans for food - as was the edible dormouse.

Gas chamber plot invented by wife, says magistrate

BY A STAFF REPORTER

THE magistrate accused of attempted murder with a home-made gas chamber told Winchester Crown Court yesterday: "I have been set up by my wife." Cranog Jones said she had framed him because she wanted to keep their house.

Mr Jones, 44, claims he drilled a hole in their bedroom wall to fit a sink as a surprise birthday present for his wife Margaret, 42. He laid white piping across the conservatory roof at their house to check it was not obvious.

"Everything she has said, every allegation she has made is false," he said. After an affair with a colleague, he returned to his wife in October 1991 in a bid to patch up their 17-year marriage. He had spent hours working on her car and planning the secret birthday present.

But just six weeks after moving back to their home at Brockhampton, Gloucestershire, he realised the reconciliation was not working. He said: "I am a little naive when it comes to women and the things they do. But it began to dawn on me that my wife was taking me for a sucker."

"I realised she wanted me out of the house. I didn't believe she wasn't having an affair." When he tried to talk to her after an initial argument about their failing marriage, she refused to listen and went to bed.

Mr Jones said: "I decided to take a petty, and with hindsight, a very stupid course of action. That was to go down to the garage and reverse all the work I had done on her car."

"I had altered the mixture and the timing on the car so I got dressed, went to the garage and started the car, pulling the choke full out."

"I was in the garage for about five minutes when I heard someone calling my name and looked up to see my ex-wife shouting from the bedroom window."

"There was no piping on the conservatory roof connected or unconnected. I went back into the garage and turned the car off because by that time I had finished doing what I was doing with the car."

"All her allegations are false. I have never had any box or piping connected in that bedroom. At no point in that time did I see Margaret again after looking up from the garage to the window."

"I never used the family's car as a guinea pig for any murder bid. I was very upset by the cat's death. It belonged to my youngest daughter Cassandra. Somehow, it became trapped in a cardboard box at the back of the garage while I was doing some work on my car."

"I left the car engine running for about ten minutes and went for a cup of tea and when I returned I saw the cat had been trapped in there and had been badly affected by the fumes. As far as I could tell it was dead so I put it into a binliner and took it up the local tip." The trial continues today.

Lakes 'at risk' from road work

BY TIM JONES
TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

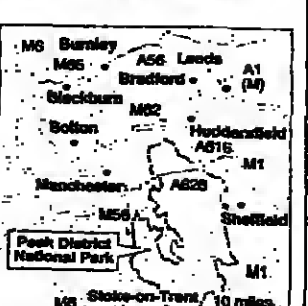
THE beauty of the Lake District could be destroyed by increased motor traffic if proposals to upgrade trans-Pennine roads are accepted by the transport department, according to a report by the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

Plans being studied by John MacGregor, the transport secretary, include further widening of the M62 and upgrading the A66.

Claims by the council that the plans include big improvements to the A628 and the A616 through the north of the Peak District National Park have already been firmly denied.

Tim Richardson of the council said: "Bigger, faster roads across the Pennines will not provide a long-term solution to environmental and economic problems."

A transport department spokesman said no decision on any options had yet been taken. "All we can say is that we will not be driving a road through the national park or undertaking any significant improvements on the roads which now go through it."



Growth spurt gives world of design a boost

BY KATE ALDERSON

UNDERWEAR, aeroplanes and cars are being redesigned to cater for the burgeoning bottom and the longer leg. British Airways has set up a task force to design seats for the taller and broader passenger, and high street shops and car companies are measuring up to accommodate the growth in the average size of British bodies.

In the space of seven years, men and women have not only grown rapidly taller, but also heavier. In 1980, the man's average height was 173.9cm (5ft 8½in) and the woman's 160.9cm (5ft 3½in). By 1987, the last available figures, men measured 174.5cm (5ft

8½in) and women 161.7cm (5ft 3½in). The average for a woman's weight was 62 kilograms (9st 10½lb) in 1980, compared with 64.3kg (10st 1½lb) in 1987, and men in 1980 weighed 73.6kg (11st 8½lb) compared with 75.9kg (11st 13½lb) six years ago.

The changes have implications for products designed around the human body, according to Ian Galer, director of ICE Ergonomics, part of Loughborough University. "Humans' remarkable growth means the motor and clothing industries' perception of a prototype human being have had to change, especially for those who make uniforms."

A spokesman for the Ford Motor Company said it had responded to the larger body by fitting more seat adjustments and designing wider seats. Marks & Spencer has long recognised that its customers are getting bigger. A spokesman said: "Brassiere sizes are getting bigger, although the average is still 34B. A big lady used to be unusual, but not any longer. Our larger sizes, 18 and 20, are very popular."

Long Tall Sally, a women's clothes shop specialising in designs for taller and broader women, has seen sales increase by half during the past three years. Sallie Grayson, the company's managing director, said: "We notice that 17 and 18-year-olds are getting

taller, and even 14-year-olds. Four times as many women in the 20-25 age group are 5ft 8in than in the 45-50 age group."

While the average adult women in Britain today is taller than many first world war soldiers and 4in taller than the average 200 years ago, the growth of the Japanese and Chinese has been much more rapid as a result of changing diets.

The average height of 17-year-old Japanese boys has gone up over a few decades from 5ft 4in to 5ft 8in, and the girls have become 3in taller since 1926. Shops in Japan are now selling extra long blankets and homes are being built with ceilings 1ft higher.

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Tory candidate claims a by-election win would confirm public confidence in John Major

Newbury campaigners say economy holds key to vote

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NEWBURY Conservatives declared yesterday that victory in the May 6 by-election would confirm public confidence in John Major's government and boost Britain's economic recovery into the bargain.

Conceding that the economy is the key issue of the campaign, Julian Davidson, the Tory candidate, insisted that nothing would be changed if the Liberal Democrats won the Berkshire seat. By voting Conservative, the Newbury electorate would be displaying "some confidence" in the government's performance in the past year.

The ebullient Mr Davidson added: "Winning this seat would move on that confidence a little bit more."

His main rival, the Liberal Democrat David Rendel, welcomed the Tory's admission that the economy is central to the campaign, but said: "I have never seen my Conservative opponent as an

■ Early signs in the West Berkshire constituency point to a large number of voters waiting to be wooed on May 6

engine of recovery." As the main political parties entered the first full week of campaigning, the early signs pointed to a substantial mass of voters still waiting to be wooed. With the economy balanced precariously between recession and recovery, there appeared to be a marked reluctance by many to commit themselves.

The Conservatives' blue and pink placards sprout out of hedgerows, while the orange Liberal Democrat posters win most of the window space in Newbury homes. Posters for Steve Giddings, the Labour candidate, appear to be almost nonexistent.

The Conservatives are throwing all they've got into the campaign, with virtually every cabinet minister lined up to appear at some stage. The Liberal Democrats, according

to Mr Rendel, are "pleasantly optimistic" of overturning the 12,357 majority in last year's general election of Judith Chaplin, the Conservative MP whose death prompted the by-election. Labour refuses to rule out success, despite polling fewer than 4,000 votes last year.

Paddy Ashdown arrived in the constituency last night to set out the message to be sent to the government by voting Liberal Democrat. In a highly personalised attack at a Newbury rally, the Liberal Democrat leader singled out for censure Michael Heseltine, John MacGregor, John Patten and Norman Lamont.

"If ever there was a moment to tell a government to mend its ways, this is that moment and this is that government,"



On the trail: Tory Julian Davidson, third from left, enlists the support of William Waldegrave, right

Islanders' protests force council to reduce tax bills

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH, SCOTLAND CORRESPONDENT

WESTERN Isles Council, which has set one of the highest levels of council tax in Britain, is to announce a large reduction in bills following a storm of protest in the Outer Hebrides.

Reports outlining cuts of up to £2 million have been prepared and were put before the council last night. Householders can now expect to see bills reduced by at least £86.

The council, which lost £23 million when the Bank of Credit and Commerce International collapsed, had increased local taxation by an average of 97 per cent, according to the Scottish Convention of Local Authorities. Islanders complained that people in the lowest council tax band would pay £9 more than Michael Heseltine, the architect of the tax, would pay on his town house in Belgravia.

The outcry has united the inhabitants of the remote islands. The average council tax for the Western Isles was originally set at £478, plus water rates of £125. Most of the population, whose houses fall into Band A, had been told

they would pay a total of £566 in council tax and water charges. That compares with a poll tax last year of £180 including water rates, one of the lowest in the country. The highest tax, for the four houses which fall into the top band, Band H, was set at £1,473 plus water rates.

The islanders say they could not afford the massive rise and nearly 3,000 of them took part in a protest march in Stornoway. A petition with 10,000 signatures was handed to the council and on the island of Barra there is a new BCCI — the Barra Committee against Council Incompetence.

Last night the council was meeting, ostensibly to discuss the Harris tweed bill which goes before the House of Lords on Thursday, but there was a move to suspend standing orders and discuss the council tax instead. Three options were outlined involving reductions of £1 million, £1.5 million and £2 million in total taxation. The £1 million reduction would lead to a cut of £86 in the bills of the 50 per cent of the population whose homes fall into Band A.

Robert Bennie, the council's director of finance, said the large rise had come about because the council wanted to kick-start the economy and ensure there was no deficit this year. The effects of the BCCI shortfall had already been dealt with, but a £2 million deficit remained because of poor poll tax collection, poor financial information, and over-optimistic assumptions.

Protesters point out that facilities on the islands are minimal and that cuts would hardly be noticed. One said: "There are about three street lights on Barra and a wheellie bin collection every two weeks."



Heseltine: Belgravia bill lower than Barra's

Smooth switch allows cuts in finance staff

By RAY CLANCY

THE change from community charge to council tax has been handled well by most local authorities, even though one in ten failed to produce a plan of action, according to a report published today.

Extra staff have not been needed to implement the changes and some councils are planning to reduce numbers working in finance offices by up to 66 per cent, the report from the Audit Commission says.

The staff reductions are expected to be a mixture of redeployment, natural wastage and redundancy, and average 24 per cent. Some staff are still being employed to deal with a backlog of unpaid poll tax.

Andrew Foster, controller of the Audit Commission, said: "Most authorities have geared themselves up to deal with the council tax, although many still have significant backlogs of community charge implementation. Authorities must continue to ensure that the council tax is operated as smoothly as possible."

The report highlights concern over computer equipment. The commission found

that 42 per cent of authorities had bought temporary equipment to use during the changeover but only half had secured an option to return it. "Many authorities could be left with more computing capacity than they need," the report says.

The local government union has said that the effects of the community charge will continue for many years. Dennis Reed, Nalco's national officer, said: "The poll tax has not yet gone away. The councils will be collecting arrears until the end of the century." He challenged the report's conclusion that extra staff were not needed and added that hundreds of temporary workers were employed throughout the country to cope with the transition.

The Audit Commission plans to continue to monitor the situation. A national study of the management of the council tax is to be undertaken later this year.

The Association of Metropolitan Authorities said that the transition had been relatively smooth. Most councils had been able to issue bills on time on April 1 and there had been only a "few hiccups".



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Sombre MPs back foreign secretary's cautious line on military action in Bosnia

Hurd warns of dangers in air strikes against Serbs

By ROBERT MORGAN, POLITICAL STAFF

MPs yesterday supported Douglas Hurd's cautious approach to the worsening situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. There was only limited backing for air strikes and any call for direct action was muted.

Sir Giles Shaw, a senior Conservative backbencher, seemed to sum up the mood when he said that they were "grateful for the fact that Mr Hurd is keeping his head while many around him are losing theirs, including those with coronets on".

Mr Hurd, the foreign secretary, made it clear that while the United Nations was hoping that other sanctions against Serbia would end the conflict, other action, including air strikes, was still being considered. Time and again he emphasised that any action had to make the situation better, not worse. And, he said, the international community, in deciding what action to take, had to think ahead to where it would be in a few weeks or a few months.

The Commons was in a sombre mood during the hour-long questioning of the foreign secretary and there was widespread support for the most rigorous enforcement of sanctions, particularly the tougher ones agreed over the weekend.

Dennis Skinner, the left-wing Labour MP for Bolsover, told the Liberal Democrats and any others pressing for direct action to "if you haven't got the guts to put your own flak jackets on, don't ask me to call upon other kids to spill their blood".

Dr Jack Cunningham, the shadow foreign secretary, criticised the decision to delay until next Monday the imposition of further sanctions against Serbia. Labour, he said, backed the government's policy of an arms embargo and called for the UN Security Council to issue an ultimatum

to the Serbs. They should be prepared to offer safe passage for refugees, women and children, the wounded and soldiers who had surrendered; there should be a permanent ceasefire and the Serbs should agree to sign the Vance-Owen peace plan. "Unless they are prepared to do that, the security council should consider authorising a punitive air strike against the Serbs' supply lines in Bosnia."

Dr Cunningham recognised the significant risk of civilian casualties from such a policy. "It may be that such an action and the continuation of the humanitarian aid effort are simply mutually exclusive," he said. "That is a matter for very, very difficult and serious political judgement."

Mr Hurd said: "I cannot quite see a great deal of point in a single punitive air strike if that put at risk the whole humanitarian effort of the UN."

Sir Russell Johnston, for the Liberal Democrats, suggested the deployment of UN troops between the Serbs and the Muslims.

Andrew Faulds, Labour MP for Warrley East, sought to raise the temperature when he said: "Do none of the second-rate ministers in this third-rate administration realise that their spunkiness in backing the Vance-Owen plan — which is hopeless and now dead — and in pursuing the ineffectiveness of sanctions, has led to the deaths of thousands upon thousands of Bosnian Muslims who have not had the weapons to defend themselves?"

He pressed for the introduction of terms "that actually stop Serb aggression by bombing their communications, their lines of supply, their airfields and the arms factories that are supplying them".

Mr Hurd replied quietly: "It



To the point: Mr Hurd and Malcolm Rifkind after a cabinet meeting yesterday

is all very well for Mr Faulds, in that senatorial tone, to make those eloquent phrases, but we have to be sure, before we go down that path, that the result is going to be the saving of life."

Replying to Sir Cranley Onslow, Tory MP for Woking, Mr Hurd said that evidence of atrocities was

being collected for the security council. Michael Ancram, Tory MP for Devon, said that while military intervention might prevent atrocities in the short-term, it could lead to a wider conflict and civil war throughout the region.

Michael Colvin, Tory MP for Romsey and Waterside, was loudly cheered when he

said that President Yeltsin was taking £28 billion from the West with one hand while giving arms and assistance to the Serbs. "The umbilical cord between Moscow and Belgrade must be cut," he said.

UK troops shelled, page 11
Force in Bosnia, page 16

Government fights a holding action

RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Douglas Hurd bought time for the government over Bosnia yesterday. He left open the military options — not least because the Clinton administration is still making up its mind — while underlining the government's continuing doubts about arming the Bosnian Muslims and about air attacks against the Serbs. There was less pressure from Tory MPs for military action than ministers expected, or feared, after weekend comments, while Jack Cunningham's intervention was generally supportive in tone, softening the impact of the toughening of Labour's line on Friday by John Smith.

Mr Hurd was at his most authoritative, in effect conducting an hour-long seminar to educate the Commons in the difficulties of the various options. This reflected the discussion, and the advice of the defence chiefs, at yesterday's meeting of the cabinet's defence and overseas policy committee. It was a pity that Baroness Thatcher was not in the peers' gallery to listen to the exchanges.

The government does not, however, have unconditional support for relying just on sanctions. The mood was rather of sceptical apprehension about the existing policy, underpinned by reluctance to urge military action. There were more dissenters than before Easter, but they were more Labour than Tory MPs.

But, as last night's Mori poll taken over the weekend for the BBC's *Panorama* programme shows, the government is lagging behind public opinion. Three-fifths are dissatisfied with its handling of the Bosnian situation, more than double the level of dissatisfaction before the air war in the Gulf in January 1991 and four times the level during the Falklands war. Half the public now believes the government is not doing enough and nearly two-thirds would favour sending an international force, including British troops, to stop the fighting.

These findings could easily change if British troops are killed but they indicate the extent of public concern over the horrors shown on television, as articulated by Lady Thatcher a week ago.

Policy is still in flux. Mr Hurd left the door, however

reluctantly, ajar. "We cannot refuse to look at all ideas, including those which have been considered before but not adopted. It is essential that policy should be agreed by the international community," he said.

No one disputes that a settlement cannot be imposed by force and most accept, at least in public, that the aim should be to secure Serbian support for the Vance-Owen plan. The point at issue is whether even the tougher sanctions agreed over the weekend will be sufficient to induce the Belgrade government to put pressure on the Bosnian Serbs to halt their aggression and to sign up to the plan. Mr Hurd appealed for sanctions to be given a chance. Many Tory MPs have their doubts, in view of past failures of sanctions, but they are not yet prepared to propose force because of their fears that this would in time involve ground troops.

There is pressure in Washington for a tougher line, particularly from members of the National Security Council staff, although this has not yet turned into specific American pressure on Europe for military action.

The Clinton administration is more likely to favour a relaxation of the arms embargo on the Bosnian Muslims rather than air strikes on Serbian supplies. But the British view is the reverse. While ministers, though not the opposition parties, still have grave doubts about air attacks, the leaderships of all parties are united against relaxing the arms embargo.

Yesterday's statement was a skillful holding operation. Some of the emotions of the past week have abated. But the pressures for military action have not disappeared.

Ministers may have won room for manoeuvre at Westminster, but what matters now is the decisions taken in the United States and whether American politicians and public are willing to engage militarily in a European conflict.

PETER RIDDELL

Beckett threatens to oppose PR report

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

MARGARET Beckett, the deputy Labour leader, is threatening to disrupt tonight's final meeting of the Plant commission on electoral reform by demanding a dissenting minority report.

Mrs Beckett, who has been a vigorous defender of the first past the post system for electing MPs, failed to persuade the commission last month to put forward a series of options including retaining the current electoral system.

After the working party decided to abandon the first past the post system and to opt for the supplementary vote, a limited form of PR, she walked out of the meeting. Yesterday Mrs Beckett made it clear that she was still considering demanding a minority report.

The commission, chaired by Lord Plant, will tonight approve the final report which is due to go to Labour's national executive meeting next week before publication. John Smith has not been an enthusiast for PR. The Plant report, or a list of options, is then expected to be sent out for consultation before a final decision is taken in July or September.

Mr Smith has insisted that the issue will be settled at the party conference in September, but some shadow cabinet members are urging him to support an referendum on the issue after the next election.

The revised document includes an appendix showing how the supplementary vote system would have translated into seats at the last election. It incorporates an expanded section on the supplementary vote. Under the system, which was only supported by a narrow majority, the electorate vote in order of preference. If no one secures 50 per cent of the vote outright, the votes of all but the first two are shared, according to preference, between the two leaders.

A decision has also been added advocating an overhauling of the voting process, with elections at weekends rather than on Thursdays. Electors would be allowed to vote up to eight days before a general election day. Four-year fixed-term parliaments are also proposed.

'Iceberg' clause threatens new defeat over Maastricht

By JONATHAN PRYNN AND JILL SHERMAN

THE government faces the possibility of defeat later this week on the Maastricht bill after an unexpected decision yesterday that MPs will, after all, be allowed to vote on the social chapter.

Ministers also faced another setback when Labour Euro-sceptics, Peter Shore and Tony Benn, tabled a motion last night calling for Michael Morris, the deputy Speaker to reconsider his decision on amendment 27 which reverses Britain's opt-out of the social chapter.

After last week's furore when MPs were denied the chance to vote on the social chapter, Mr Morris announced yesterday that they would be allowed to vote on a further social chapter amendment, clause 74, which is likely to come before the Commons on Thursday.

Tory Euro-sceptics and the Labour leadership seized on his decision as another opportunity to embarrass the government. The amendment, new clause 74, dubbed by Labour sources as the "iceberg amendment", requires a separate Commons vote on the social chapter before the Maastricht ratification bill takes effect.

After the announcement in the Commons, Labour MPs

still complained about not being allowed to vote on amendment 27, which is aimed at deleting Britain's opt-out from the social chapter. Privately they voiced delight that after a long session of representations to Mr Morris he had relented on new clause 74. They also remain hopeful that the Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, may yet select amendment 27 when the bill returns to the House for its report stage.

Dr Jack Cunningham, the shadow foreign secretary, said the deputy Speaker's ruling "has not changed our view about the significance of amendment 27" and that he had given "no valid reason" why MPs should not be allowed to vote on it.

Dr Cunningham had been doing his utmost to prevent the Labour Euro-sceptics going ahead with what they regarded as a censure motion on Mr Morris. Several Tory MPs also seemed unenthusiastic about the move, unwilling to support a motion which was likely to be lost.

Dr Cunningham later said that if the censure motion was lost it could jeopardise Labour's chances of persuading Miss Boothroyd to accept amendment 27 at the report stage of the bill. "It is the wrong judgment in these circumstances and risks losing amendment 27 altogether," Dr Cunningham said.

Mr Morris was earlier subjected to an increasingly personal barrage of complaints from MPs opposed to the Maastricht bill who saw amendment 27 as their best hope of wrecking the treaty. Some Labour MPs accused Mr Morris of not acting impartially in his selection of amendments. Dennis Skinner, MP for Bolsover, said there was "something bent" about the decision. The deputy Speaker was "acting like a Tory MP of behalf of the government", Mr Skinner said.

Cunningham: opposed to censure motion

Fowler declares recession over

By NICHOLAS WOOD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE government yesterday declared the recession over — 30 months after the longest downturn in output since the 1930s. A week ahead of new GDP figures expected to show a rise of at least 0.5 per cent in the first quarter of the year, Sir Norman Fowler gave the most optimistic assessment of the economy since 1990.

Ever since Norman Lamont's ill-starred "green shoots" prediction in the autumn of 1991, senior ministers have been reluctant to forecast decisively the economic outlook. But yesterday Sir Norman, the party chairman, cast aside caution. "The recession is over. We are recovering. We are recovering

industrially. We are recovering economically," he said.

Pressed at a press conference in London on next month's county council elections, Sir Norman went well beyond past ministerial predictions.

The danger for Sir Norman is that if the economic rebound proves short-lived, ministers will again face accusations that they have talked up the upturn on the basis of fragile evidence.

Sir Norman argued that the Conservatives were on the upward curve in the Newbury by-election on May 6 and the county council elections on the same day. He said that the government would hold the

seal left vacant by the death of Judith Chaplin.

"The strengthening economy provides an excellent background to the Conservative campaign for the elections on May 6. No one is claiming that all our economic problems are over — but it is equally clear that Conservative policies to boost our economy are bearing fruit."

Sir Norman was backed by Michael Howard, the environment secretary, and John Redwood, the local government minister, in making the Liberal Democrats, the main challengers in the by-election and many of the county hall votes, the object of their scorn.

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Italians deliver decisive vote for poll reform

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS
IN ROME

The referendum result reflects popular rejection of corrupt party politics. A government is to be formed in Rome to oversee the change to a new voting system

PRESIDENT Scalfaro of Italy yesterday began searching for a new government to oversee electoral reform after Italians voted overwhelmingly to end proportional representation and half a century of corrupt party politics.

Exit polls showed 82.4 per cent of voters in the two-day referendum choosing a mainly first-past-the-post system to be introduced in the senate, and by implication mandating similar reform in election of the lower house, the chamber of deputies.

"This is an extraordinary victory," said Mario Segni, the leader of the referendum movement and a former Christian Democrat politician. "With the help of God the Italian people succeeded in making this choice peacefully and in a democratic way."

Giuliano Amato, the prime minister, went to the Quirinal Palace yesterday afternoon and told the president why "he considers the task of his government is over," according to a presidential statement. Signor Amato is expected to

hand in his resignation later this week after a parliamentary debate that President Scalfaro hopes will cast light on what sort of government the political parties are willing to join to oversee the implementation of reform.

The leader of Signor Amato's Socialist party, Giorgio Benvenuto, indicated that the prime minister should not attempt to form a second government. Signor Benvenuto has in recent weeks changed his mind repeatedly on whether to support Signor Amato.

Signor Segni announced a victory party for his supporters in the Piazza Navona in Rome last night and the editor of the *Corriere della Sera*, Fausto Miele, called for Signor Segni to be the next prime minister. Leaders of the former communist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) called on its militants to attend celebrations at party headquarters. Marco

Pannella, the leader of the Radical party, said that the vote was as striking as the referendums that led to the legalisation of divorce and abortion in Italy in the 1970s. In a separate referendum, 88 per cent of voters supported an end to most public financing of parties, considered a key cause of corruption in the post-war Italian republic.

But commentators said that Signor Scalfaro faced a difficult task in trying to usher in a new government to steer reform through parliament, not least because of squabbling between different parties in favour of reform. Signor Pannella already has accused the leader of the PDS, Achille Occhetto, of seeking to betray the wishes of the electorate by calling for a two-round winner-takes-all system on French lines. Signor Pannella favours a single-round winner-takes-all system on the British

model. Signor Occhetto has called repeatedly for an "institutional government" including the PDS and the opposition Republicans as well as the four parties in Signor Amato's coalition — the Socialists, Christian Democrats, Liberals and Social Democrats. Signor Occhetto strongly rejected the criticism of Signor Pannella.

The Christian Democrat leader, Mino Martinazzoli, on Sunday reiterated his objection to joining a government headed by a leader of the PDS. His party has expressed doubts about the ability of the PDS to deal with the country's economic problems.

Pundits yesterday were watching to see if the PDS or the Christian Democrats would seek a compromise in the light of the huge vote in favour of change. The Christian Democrats have also so far resisted suggestions that the Lombrardi League should join a new government. The bickering is a reminder that politicians' attitudes will not necessarily change overnight despite the referendum. Newspapers speculated that Signor Scalfaro may resort to



Blonde ambition: Alessandra Mussolini, the neo-fascist Italian Social Movement MP, casts her vote in Rome

asking Signor Amato to form a second government in which most ministers would be technical experts — a so-called "government of professors". Signor Pannella has let it be known he would support such

an administration. But commentators agree that any government lacking the support of the PDS is unlikely to be much more than a stop-gap before an early general election.

Opinion polls show that, in the wake of the corruption scandal that has convulsed the country over the past year, the Christian Democrats would win only 18 per cent in a general election held now,

compared with 20 per cent for the PDS. If the parties cannot reach an agreement, the country risks the prospect of a general election with different voting systems for the senate and the chamber of deputies.

Marksmen guard ghetto ceremony

FROM ROGER BOYES IN WARSAW

WARSAW was under the tightest security since martial law yesterday to prevent demonstrations by right-wing skinheads or actions by foreign terrorists from derailing the fiftieth anniversary commemorations of the Warsaw ghetto uprising.

Marksmen from three countries patrolled rooftops as politicians, including Al Gore, the American vice-president, Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister, and Rita Süssmuth, the German parliamentary Speaker, laid wreaths at the stark marble monument in what was the ghetto's heart. The anniversary, under the patronage of President Walesa of Poland and President Herzog of Israel, is an attempt to reconcile Poles with Jews and to dispel Jewish charges of Polish anti-Semitism.

The anniversary has been dogged by the controversy over a Carmelite convent near the Auschwitz concentration camp and by arguments among ghetto survivors about who can rightfully speak for the resistance. The Polish government became nervous that the occasion would backfire on Warsaw when about 60 skinheads marched through the streets on Saturday to protest against the thousands of Jews who have come to Warsaw for the ceremonies.

When the skinheads tried to

gather on Sunday for a second day of trouble, they found themselves picked up one by one by the police. Commando and anti-terrorist units surrounded all central hotels, all restaurants serving kosher food, a café that plays Israeli music and the Yiddish theatre. Plainclothes agents have been watching the Jewish cemetery and helicopters clatter over where the ghetto stood until the Nazis razed it in 1943. In addition, Israeli Mossad agents have been in Warsaw for three weeks checking on the movements of foreigners from the Middle East.

Amid the intensity of the security, however, it has been difficult to find a spontaneous spark. Poles and Jews are still being kept at arm's length. On Sunday night, Polish Jewish students, forced into emigration or expelled from university during the 1968 anti-Semitic purges, managed to stage a big reunion party in a hired theatre, but there have been few such occasions.

Mr Walesa used Mr Gore's presence yesterday to urge Washington to continue to expand aid for reformers in Eastern Europe. The Poles fear that the new US administration is devoting all its energy to aiding President Yeltsin and Russia's fledgling reforms and leaving Central Europe to struggle alone.

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Hani's killing has given ANC radicals new heart for battle

FROM RAY KENNEDY AND MICHAEL HAMLYN
IN JOHANNESBURG

THE assassination of Chris Hani, the South African Communist leader, has given new impetus to long-standing allegations of a right-wing white conspiracy to wreck the peace process, and persuaded the African National Congress to embrace radicalism publicly.

Nelson Mandela, the ANC president, has repeatedly made the point that the gun which killed Hani was among weapons that disappeared from an air force armory in Pretoria two years ago. A leading right-winger, Piet Rudolph, was accused of stealing the weapons but was granted indemnity last year after months as a fugitive.

More fuel was added to the conspiracy theory by the weekend arrest of Clive Derby-Lewis, a former MP of the Conservative Party and member of the President's Council, who is being questioned about links with Janusz Walus, the Polish immigrant

accused of killing Hani. Even as Hani's body lay in state on Sunday, four black gunmen hijacked a car in Sobokeng south of Johannesburg, killed the driver and his wife, and then opened fire randomly in the township killing 17 people. One injured woman said yesterday that before they shot her they called: "Do you know what your children are doing?"

The incident bore the hall-mark of what the ANC calls "third force" activity — the hiring of thugs by clandestine groups to carry out their dirty work. The government has always denied the existence of a "third force" within the security forces, but last November investigators acting for the Goldstone commission of inquiry into public violence raided an operations unit of military intelligence in Pretoria. They seized files outlining plans to compromise criminally members of the ANC's armed wing, Um-

Pragmatists in the leadership of the African National Congress have opted for negotiation. However, they are being undermined by the violent turn of events

khonto we Sizwe. Soon afterwards, President de Klerk announced that 23 senior army officers, including two major generals, would be retiring early.

The parties of the mainstream right are the Conservative Party, led by Andries Treurnicht, who broke away from the ruling Nationalists in 1982, and the Herstigte Nasionale Party.

The rabid right is headed by the neo-fascist Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) under Eugene Terre-Blanche. AWB members, in khaki uniforms and Nazi-style insignia, were conspicuously visible on the fringes of the Hani funeral cortege.

But the most dangerous recent development has been the formation of rogue cells of right-wingers who consider

even the AWB to be too moderate. After the killing of a white mother and two teenagers by black gunmen near Johannesburg last month, Mr Terre-Blanche said that a renegade AWB cell was planning a series of revenge attacks.

There has always been a strain of radicalism within the ANC, but since the organisation's legitimisation in 1990 that has been balanced by a more thoughtful, pragmatic tendency. The pragmatists believe that power cannot be transferred to the black majority except by negotiation. The insurrectionists believe that power can be seized from white hands by the people taking to the streets, and making it impossible for the ministers to govern.

At present the insurrectionists are in the driving seat. The ANC wants to coerce the government into naming an election date for the official end of white rule. More immediately, they want the installation of a transitional executive council which would take joint control of the security forces.

This new militancy is fuelled by the bitterness and anger among the black community over Hani's death. He was the nearest thing the country had to a popular hero, brave on the battlefield, clever in the corridors, incandescent on a platform.

The genuine anger is reflected in this characteristic remark by a township resident to a black reporter: "We knew they would kill him. This time they are going to pay. This is totally unacceptable. Now is the time for everyone to start preparing for a full-scale war against these vultures."

Hani funeral, page 1
Leading article, page 19



Outrider: Eugene Terre-Blanche, leader of the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement. His supporters were conspicuous on the fringes of Hani's funeral

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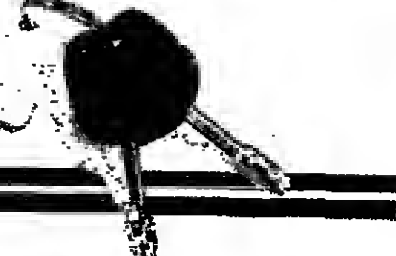
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Arab deportees savour sweet scent of revenge

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN MARI AZ-ZAHOUR

AFTER 125 days in exile, Palestinians dumped by Israel in what was a snowy no man's land are now thriving in this makeshift camp that, true to its name — Arabic for "field of flowers" — is alive with spring blossoms.

The 396 deportees see their survival and the problems their mass deportation has caused for Israel as sweet revenge on Yitzhak Rabin, the prime minister who sent them into exile. "We did not want to become heroes," said Abdel Aziz Rantisi, their leader, a doctor from the occupied Gaza Strip, "but the evil-doer Rabin brought it upon himself."

Since they were left on a rocky hillside between Israeli and Lebanese army lines, conditions for the men, who originally numbered 415, have improved greatly. Despite Lebanon's refusal to allow them entry, they have settled into a routine whose propaganda value has been boosted since they acquired a satellite telephone and a fax line, donated by left-wing Italian sympathisers.

Their camp now has a medical tent, cars, generators, televisions, shortwave radios and a donkey for smuggling food. Even a shop has been opened in a nearby building by an enterprising — and increasingly wealthy — farmer. The exiles use three cell-phones to call their families and to do live broadcasts for international news organisations whose interest in their plight has been reawakened by last Friday's protest march aimed at sabotaging the Middle East peace talks.

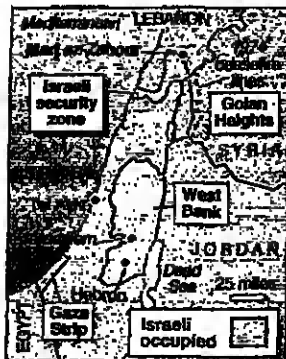
The deportees boast of the deteriorating security situation in Israel since they were banished in revenge for the kidnapping and murder of a border policeman. "Four hundred men thrown out with nothing have succeeded in pressuring Israel and promoting international awareness about their humiliation," said Omar Fawaz, head of the medical team, which includes ten doctors and uses medicines smuggled in by night.

Since the bizarre camp sprung up in the shadow of

the still snowy peak of Mount Hermon, it has sprouted a growing collection of white burial flags. One has been planted in protest every day since the United Nations Security Council passed resolution 799, calling for the men's immediate return, but took no action to force Israel to obey it.

"The Palestine Liberation Organisation has betrayed us because it claimed it would never contemplate making peace again with Israel until we had all returned home," said Aziz Dweik, 45, a father of six from the occupied West Bank. "We know that if they do decide to talk they will never be able to live in their homes again, because they will be cursed day and night by the Palestinian people."

The Islamic fanaticism of the exiles, all alleged followers of Hamas or Jihad, the two main Muslim Palestinian factions, has grown during their



aimless days in no man's land. With more extreme protests, such as last week's self-styled "death march", the exiles have proved that, with modern communications, even the remotest corner of a barren region can be turned into a political platform with wide international ramifications. "We are all determined on one thing," Dr Dweik said. "We will never be forgotten in this world or the next."

□ Sidon: Gunmen firing silenced pistols yesterday assassinated Ibrahim Abdel Magid Turkiyeh, 40, an official of the PLO's Fatah group in southern Lebanon, security sources here said, adding that the killing was part of a Palestinian power struggle. (Reuters)

Hamas death threat to Palestinian delegate

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN JERUSALEM

THE Palestinian delegation to the Middle East talks has been threatened with violence by radicals opposed to negotiations with Israel, for the first time since the peace process began in 1991.

Activists from the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, have threatened to kill the deputy head of the negotiating team, Saeb Erekat. "Four hooded men came to our house and threatened to kill Saeb within 48 hours unless he withdrew from the peace talks," said his wife, speaking from their home at Jericho, in the West Bank. He was abroad at the time. "They also threatened to set light to our house with our children inside and torch the car."

There are fears that the warning could be the start of an all-out fight among Palestinians in the occupied territo-

ries. The Palestine Liberation Organisation's Fatah group, which supports the talks, has long been the dominant political force in the territories, and opposition from rejectionist groups has been largely peaceful. However, since the deportation of 415 Islamic militants to Lebanon in December, extremist groups have gained in popularity and may now feel strong enough to challenge Fatah on the streets.

□ Cairo: Prince Saud al-Faisal, the Saudi foreign minister, has urged other Gulf states to release funds for the PLO blocked in 1990 over its stance during the Gulf conflict. Palestinian delegates to the peace talks said. The gesture was thought to be aimed at easing the PLO's isolation and encouraging the Palestinians to attend the forthcoming round of talks. (Reuters)

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مكتبة الأصل

Croat shelling adds to the dangers of UK troops in Vitez

BY MICHAEL EVANS,
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT,
AND ADAM LEBOR
IN SPLIT

THE explosion of an artillery shell 200 yards from the British military camp at Vitez in central Bosnia yesterday highlighted the growing dangers faced by soldiers who are serving with the United Nations protection forces.

The shell, a 152mm calibre fired from the Croat howitzer nicknamed "Nora", located about a quarter of a mile from the camp, was not aimed directly at the base. British military sources in Bosnia said. The gun has been used in the past few days as a direct-fire weapon against Muslim targets in the town.

About 800 soldiers from the Cheshire Regiment, 9th/12th Lancers, and other regiments are based at the camp. It is located in the local primary school, which is at the opposite

■ If the fighting between the nominally allied Croats and Muslims continues around the central Bosnian town, the aid supply route from Split in Croatia could be cut

end of the town to principal Muslim military positions.

Ministers in London were keeping a close watch on events in Vitez. In January, after Serbs deliberately shelled the British forward logistics base at Tominoslavgrad in southwest Bosnia, the government sent a small naval task force, led by the aircraft carrier, HMS Ark Royal, to the Adriatic with extra soldiers and 105mm light guns, but the additional firepower has remained at sea.

Defence ministry sources said ministers regarded the latest eruption of fighting between Croats and Muslims in Vitez as part of the general escalation of violence in central Bosnia. Originally, the British base was to have been in the mainly Muslim town of Tuzla, but the location was switched to Vitez because the supply route from Split meant crossing Serb lines.

If the Croat-Muslim fighting continues in Vitez, the supply route from Split in Croatia could also be cut. A military spokesman in Split said a convoy was due to leave Split today for Vitez. Between 150 and 200 people have been killed in four days of fighting, according to a British military spokeswoman.

Lieutenant Colonel Bob Stewart, commander of the Cheshire Regiment, said his men were "sometimes being shot at" during the fierce battles. Lt Col Stewart said on BBC radio that he had spoken to both local commanders and had arranged for a ceasefire to start at midnight. "The ceasefire in Vitez is spasmodic but most certainly in the area to our east there is a fierce battle taking place at the moment," he said. "We are saving lives by going to places where no one else can go and pulling out children, women, old men, and frankly anyone who is injured."

Clashes spread yesterday from Vitez to Kiseljak, 20 miles west of Sarajevo, where the UN headquarters is based. At least six civilians were killed and many more wounded, UN sources said.

□ **Turks airborne:** Turkey yesterday confirmed the departure of F16 fighter bombers to join the Clear Skies operation, enforcing the no-fly zone over Bosnia, despite a ban on flights over Greece (writes Andrew Finkel).

The planes, four of a total commitment of 18, took a more circuitous route along flight paths south of Crete, Bulgaria, too, has imposed a ban. Michalis Papaconstantinou, the Greek foreign minister, was in Ankara yesterday and was told of Turkey's anger over what he sees as a hostile gesture by a Nato ally.

Russian warning, page 1
Parliament, page 8
Military choices, page 16

Wounded airlifted from Srebrenica

FROM LAURA PITTER IN TUZLA

THEIR screams drowned out by the roar of engines and rotor blades, the bandaged and mutilated refugees from Srebrenica were carried yesterday from the huge white United Nations helicopters that had ferried them to the relative safety of Tuzla.

Men, women and children were carried off the aircraft. Some were clutching a pathetic handful of possessions, all they had been able to rescue from the year-long siege of their town.

More than 100 seriously sick and wounded were flown out yesterday after the Muslim-defended east Bosnian town was declared a "safe area" by the UN to protect it from the advancing Serbs. Some of the refugees had heavily bandaged stumps after recent amputations.

Others winced in agony with every movement as they were taken out of the helicopters on stretchers and rushed to hospital. Some had infected wounds, the result of makeshift surgery, often performed in primitive conditions without anaesthetic.

Even after the relief flights

on Sunday and yesterday, an estimated 280 wounded remained in Srebrenica and UN officials were beginning to doubt that they could get them all out by late last night. "There are more people in there who need help," Rod Kay, operations officer with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Muslim-controlled Tuzla, said. "We would like to take all of them out but, to be realistic, we will possibly only be able to take 200 if there are no hold-ups by the Serbs."

The Puma and Sea King helicopters began the rescue operation on Sunday under a UN-mediated ceasefire agreement signed by Muslim and Serb military commanders in Sarajevo. The agreement was intended to allow those who want to leave to be evacuated, but a UN land convoy that reached Srebrenica yesterday was prevented by the town's Muslim authorities from evacuating anyone. Lyndall Sachs, a UNHCR official, said the relief convoy of nine lorries would abide by the Muslim decision. "We're not taking anyone out," she said. (Reuters)

Black marketeers call the shots in frontier town

SAMARA is bandit country. "Lock your doors at night," the hotel staff whispered. "The whole place has been taken over by the mafia."

They lurk in leather jackets around the dirty railway station and at the ramshackle airport, smoking, dealing, eyeing passengers, men from the Caucasus or Central Asia with stubbled faces, gold teeth and darting eyes. Samara is only two hours from the Lada factory at Togliatti, which acts as a magnet to all criminals.

In January, 16 people were killed in a fight between gangs fighting for control of black market territory. Even in tsarist times the city, a gateway to the Urals and Siberia, was notorious for its brigands. It was a frontier town, founded to protect the Russians against the Muslim Tatars and the Bashkirs, and retains an atmosphere of menace.

Samara has just recovered its original name. For two generations it was known as Kuibyshev, after one of the early Bolshevik revolutionaries. The city's misfortune was that during the war huge arms factories were transferred here. These enterprises now make Tu-154 planes, space shuttle parts and other avionics. As a result, the town has been closed to foreigners since

Michael Binyon, travelling through Russia, finds the mafia profiting as people struggle to shrug off the past
Fifth stop: SAMARA



the war. Far from foreign eyes, Kuibyshev slumped into disorder and disrepair, as the population grew to one and a half million.

Lifting the ban on foreign contacts has helped the city. After years of decline and emigration, the Jewish community, now 12,000-strong, has begun to reassert itself. Israeli agronomists are among the most active foreign investors in Samara. Other outside investment is also trickling in: an American dairy firm is improving milk production and Germans have boosted potato yields by up to three times.

But the city where Lenin practised as a lawyer from 1892-3 remains mired in

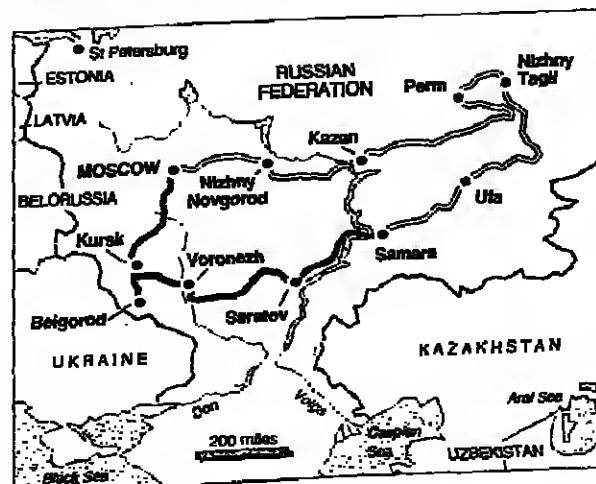
the collapse of the system he founded. "There has been no reform at all. It simply isn't working," said Aleksandr Sokolov, the radical editor of the main independent newspaper in Samara.

A former deputy in the Supreme Soviet, he is now critical of the man he helped bring to power. "The mechanism has not changed at all. There is no market — only speculators. The West does not understand what is happening here."

His paper has been spurred on by Nikolai Chukanov, one of the economists who was advising the Russian government on reform plans and has now dismissed all attempts to introduce a market system because he sees them as doomed. The paper has appealed to everyone outside Moscow who believes in reform to join a national movement for genuine change and opposition to the "neo-communists" who are against the reforms.

Few people in Samara seem to care what he will advise. Most expressed apathy about the referendum on Sunday. Their main concern was to try to get their town moving, to protect their jobs and to make enough money to keep inflation at bay. The mafia will be all right: the lucrative black market is assured.

□ **Moscow:** Communists are plotting the "physical removal" of President Yeltsin, according to a report of secret meetings of the Communist party leaked to *Verkhnyaya Moskva*. The newspaper claims that a "terrorist and assault detachment" has been set up inside the party.



Painful arrival: a wounded refugee from Srebrenica grimaces as he helped on to a stretcher in Tuzla where he was flown aboard a UN helicopter yesterday

UN aims to tighten Yugoslavia noose with new sanctions

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

THE sanctions adopted by the United Nations Security Council at the weekend are intended to plug several holes in the earlier trade embargo on the rump state of Yugoslavia, and are the most severe ever imposed by the UN.

The original embargo, introduced last May, banned the import or export of any goods and commodities except food and medicine, cut air links, suspended sporting and cultural ties, and froze Yugoslavia's foreign assets. It was designed to minimise damage to neighbouring countries dependent on transport routes through Serbia and Montenegro by allowing trans-shipment of goods across Yugoslav territory provided the cargoes were notified to the United Nations. Those lax provisions for trans-shipment were abused by the Serbs, who managed to get oil and other supplies by land, by sea and along the Danube.

Officials of the European Community and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe reported in Bulgaria last week that about 90 per cent of the goods supposed to be shipped across Serbia to Macedonia had ended up in Serbia in violation of the embargo. Even the Bulgarian rolling stock carrying the cargo was seized. Countries supplying Yugoslavia also commonly claimed that their goods were destined for Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia or Croatia that were not included in the embargo.

Until Western nations put pressure on Romania last autumn, a large amount of oil and other commodities were finding their way to Serbia down the Danube. And at least three ships slipped into the Montenegrin port of Bar to unload oil, the most recent delivering three weeks' supply despite the Western naval blockade in the Adriatic.

The latest resolution imposes a virtual ban on the trans-shipment of goods across Yugoslavia or Serb-held parts of Bosnia and Croatia. The only exceptions will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the UN sanctions committee, a provision intended to help Macedonia which is blockaded from one side by Greece. The resolution also calls on neighbouring states to reduce the number of land crossings into Yugoslavia.

The package also mandates stricter controls on the Danube, which will probably require international monitors to accompany every group of barges passing along the river to supply Hungary and Austria's industries. It will also permit Western navies to intercept shipping inside Yugoslavia's territorial waters in the Adriatic to prevent sanctions-busters creeping up the coast within the 12-mile limit. There is also a draconian provision that all Yugoslav trains, planes, ships and lorries abroad must be impounded, and any vehicle trying to cross Yugoslav frontiers must be detained for investigation.

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The scissors are probably among the cutlery in the kitchen drawer.

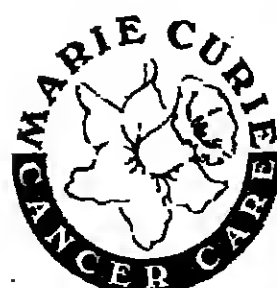
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IT LIKE THIS?

Why the FBI besiegers tired of broken vows

FROM JAIME ARON OF ASSOCIATED PRESS
AND BEN MACINTYRE IN WACO, TEXAS

TO THOSE outside the heavily armed Branch Davidian cult's compound near Waco, Texas, there was a strange feeling about the 51st morning of the siege by federal agents.

The routine that law enforcement agents had fallen into suddenly changed. Instead of fleets of vehicles coming and going for their 5am shift change, there was only an incoming trickle of Texas Department of Public Safety vehicles. And they did not stop as usual to chat at the checkpoint.

A few minutes before six o'clock, a trooper warned

who were seeking to arrest Mr Koresh and search for illegal weapons, the element of surprise. It may also have caused the death of four of the agents and six members of the cult.

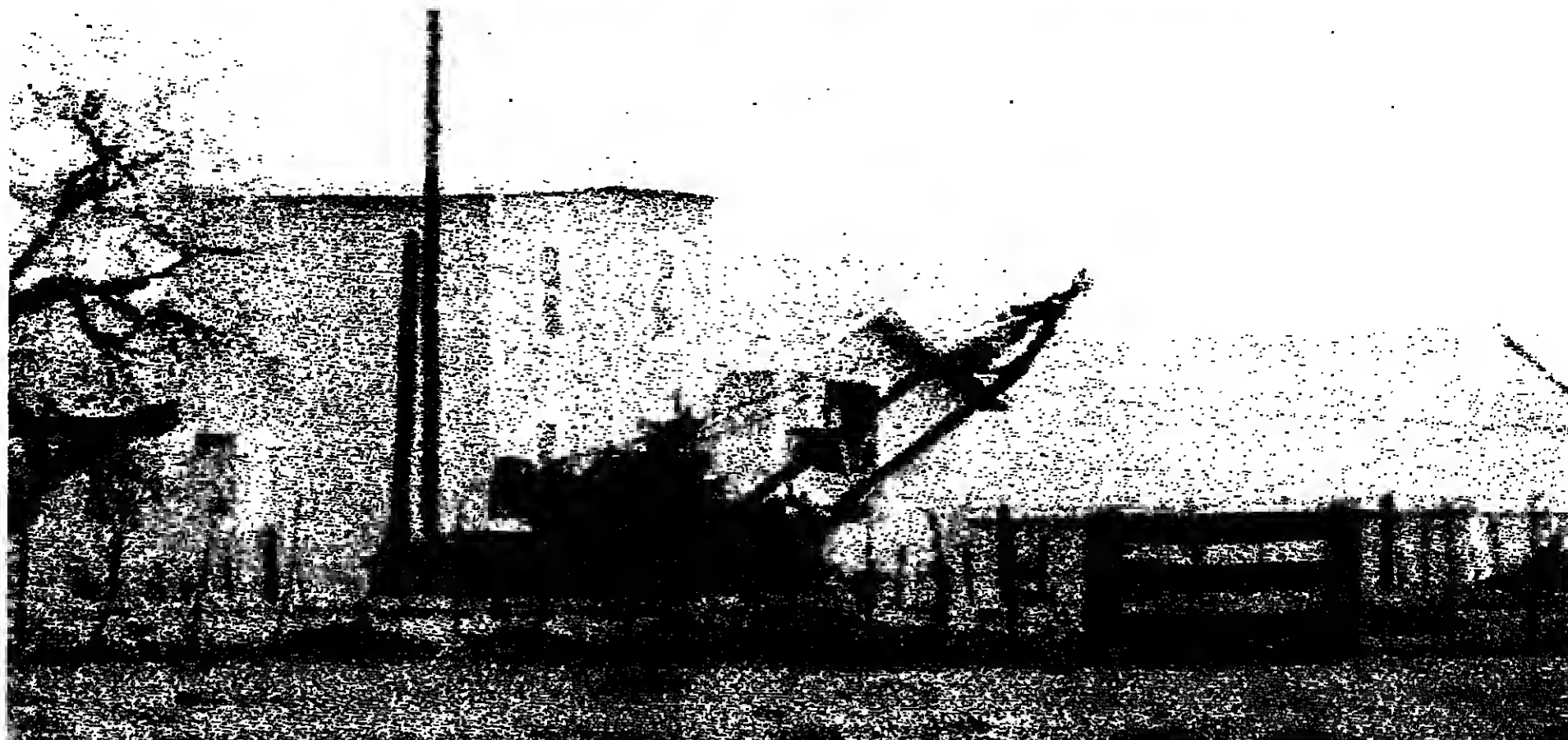
Early yesterday, Mr Koresh received another critically important phone call — this time from the FBI — warning him that the authorities were going to force him out if he did not surrender. But whoever answered the call hung up.

Moments later an armoured vehicle smashed into the front wall of the compound, beginning a steady ramming of the fortress that would last most of the morning on and off. Cult members hung out a banner saying their phone was dead, but the assault continued.

Mr Koresh had said he would surrender after completing a religious manuscript deciphering the Bible's seven seals, which hint at an end to the world. On Saturday, however, the FBI announced that it had grown tired of his broken promises.

The siege began, also at dawn, on a misty morning last February when about 200 armed agents approached the compound. Seconds after some of them hammered on the door, gunfire hailed down on them from at least 50 positions within the heavily fortified building.

The force of the barrage, from high-powered assault weapons and at least one 50mm rifle — used for stopping tanks and bringing down aircraft — took the



Driving force: an armoured vehicle, with a battering ram attached, entering the Branch Davidian compound yesterday, as the FBI made their move against the armed cult

agents by surprise. What should have been a fairly routine arrest suddenly became the most disastrous episode in the history of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

The agents initially returned fire and one team tried to enter the building by an upper-storey window but was driven back by heavy fire.

There then began one of the strangest sieges in US history, far longer than that of the great Texas siege on the Alamo. Mr Koresh and his followers had been preparing for such an assault for rather longer than the federal agents. They had been stockpiling weapons, ammunition, food and even gas-masks and bulletproof clothing.

Mr Koresh has been described as a charismatic and highly unstable character. His creed was a bizarre combination of apocalyptic Christianity, violence and sexual manipulation, of which he was the focus and self-proclaimed "messiah". An investigation by a local newspaper, just before the assault, revealed a community in thrall

to the personality of this one man, who insisted that only his own offspring would participate in the heavenly era he would usher in. As a result he claimed many of the female cult members as his wives to spread what he called the "righteous seed".

An FBI hostage team was flown in, and telephone negotiations initially appeared pos-

sible after several of the children in the compound were released. It soon emerged, however, that Mr Koresh had his own plans: namely to spread his peculiar and verbose views and to garner as much publicity for himself as possible.

With armoured personnel carriers and combat tanks encircling his compound, he

announced that he would surrender if the FBI would transport one of his sermons to the outside world. The agency did so, only to find that the cult leader had no intention of honouring his pledge.

It was the first of his many broken promises.

Inferno ends siege, page 1
Leading article, page 19

THE DAY OF RECKONING

members of the media camped about two miles from the compound to "take cover", adding: "It's coming down."

Within minutes, flashes of light came from a section of the sprawling rural fortress and armoured vehicles could be seen converging on the building containing David Koresh, the cult leader, and 95 followers, including up to 20 Britons. Then a school bus and an ambulance went into the compound.

Officials of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms have always said that the siege began with a phone call dopping off David Koresh, the cult leader, that the bureau was about to stage a big raid. That call, the bureau says, cost its agents,

Poison chalice of a false messiah

BY KATE ALDERSON

IN November 1978, the Rev Jim Jones commanded his followers to lie down and die, with the result that 900 men, women and children committed mass suicide in Guyana. Their deaths became known as the Jonestown massacre.

Weeks passed before soldiers from the US Graves Registration Department, working day and night, could establish how many, and who, had died in the mass suicide pact at the People's Temple in South America.

At first they believed that 400 cult members had died.

STATES OF SIEGE

but during the following weeks the death toll rose to more than 900. Jones, who was discovered dead on the steps of the temple pavilion, a bullet hole in the side of his head, had persuaded his "citizens" to commit "revolutionary suicide" by taking a lethal poison of cyanide, sleeping drugs and tranquilisers mixed in an orange drink.

When members of the American air force entered the pavilion, they were confronted with ranks of Jones's followers lying dead. Among them were 80 children who had been given the poison first.

Loudspeakers which were used to broadcast their leader's messages around the camp had sounded "Mother,

mother", the signal for his followers to take the poison and prepare to die. It was the final act he had forced them to rehearse for many months.

Many cult members were heavily armed and some of the dead were found with bullets in their bodies, having been shot while suffering from the agony of the poison.

Those who followed Jones in America told of the beatings, viciousness and cruelty which came to characterise his leadership.

Thousands handed over life savings to Jones, signing away property and land. Jones preached that smoking, drinking and marital sex were evil and ordered public beatings for rule-breakers.

It was not until 1977 that the affairs of Jones came under public scrutiny, when allegations of ritual beatings and humiliation were taken seriously by the media. The number of defections in California began to grow and Jones then knew it was time to move on.

Jones had set himself up as a messiah, originally establishing his cult in California, where 100 of his followers settled after selling their homes. Membership grew fast, as did the cult's income. Jones eventually moved the entire cult, and hundreds more followers, to Guyana earlier in 1978. The 6,000-mile journey was not far enough.



Braced for action: a policeman manning a checkpoint at Waco as the end of the 51-day siege drew near

Lonely egotist who developed a grim obsession with martyrdom

BY BEN MACINTYRE

DAVID KORESH: CULT LEADER

DAVID Koresh, the leader of the Branch Davidian cult, who yesterday fulfilled his prophecy and apparently perished in flames with many of his followers, began life as Vernon Howell — a lonely, anti-social child with deep religious convictions and an uncanny knack for memorising large sections of the scriptures.

Vernon Howell, a poor, illegitimate and unexceptional child from rural east Texas, desperately wanted to be different. Eventually that would lead him to establish a personality cult with all the hallmarks of his own disturbed character — religious fanaticism, egomania and a taste for sexual manipulation.

The cult he eventually led to the fields of central Texas bears many similarities to that of the Rev Jim Jones, the religious cult leader who persuaded hundreds of his followers to commit mass suicide in the forests of Guyana in November 1978. Like Jones, Vernon Howell never showed any doubts in his own convictions, and like Jones his own martyrdom became a grim obsession.

Since the siege at Mount Carmel began, a grim picture of the effects of the cult of personality has emerged. From being a sad young man, Mr Koresh developed into a megalomaniac bully, who forged his followers into what he calls "God's Marines", a

highly-trained army of fanatics dedicated to him alone.

Mr Koresh's mother, Bonnie Haldeman, has described her son as a fervently Christian child who would spend hours praying alone. "I've seen him sitting by his bed, on his knees for hours, crying and praying," she said recently. His mother recalled that when older members of their local Seventh Day Adventist Church refused to allow him to participate in services, he became bitter. "It was mostly the coldness of the church he was in that affected him," she said.

After dropping out of high school, an unpopular student with poor marks, Vernon Howell first tried to make his mark as a rock singer, touring Texas bars and nightclubs with a dog and singing songs with a religious theme.

The cold shoulder of an established church apparently persuaded Vernon Howell, who changed his name to David Koresh two years ago, to establish his own cult.

In the 1980s, after a bitter and sometime violent battle for leadership, he became leader of the Branch Davidian sect, an offshoot of the Seventh Day Adventists (now disavowed by that church) and gradually he extended his psychological hold over the members while recruiting others from around the world. David Koresh now believed

that he would father a new House of David in Texas; he claimed conjugal rights to his followers' wives while insisting that they would have to wait to get to heaven to find their own partners. Claiming that he himself had been abused as a child, according to some reports he also molested the youngest members of the group.

Convinced that he was able to open the Biblical Seventh Seal to usher in the final judgment and the catastrophic events that would destroy mankind, Mr Koresh became increasingly violent and egotistical. Some of his followers recall the alteration in his character as his self-obsession increased: "He totally changed," said Robyn Bundy, a former cult follower and the mother of one of his many children. "He was really nice. He was humble. He was very well-mannered... He's become this obnoxious, foul-mouthed, puffy person."

Stockpiling weapons and organising paramilitary manoeuvres in the fields around the Mount Carmel compound, Mr Koresh had schooled his followers to expect death in a shoot-out with authorities. Perhaps the most significant part of Mr Koresh's charismatic personality was his preaching style, alternately threatening and persuasive and highly potent. Even those who fled the cult

remember to his mesmerising oratory.

But during negotiations with the group, the FBI said that Mr Koresh had made no mention of the possibility of mass suicide and despite his threatening rhetoric, the cult leader himself had always insisted that when death came it would be at the hands of others.

The compound that went up in flames last night had several buildings, most new or rebuilt, that were connected by tunnels, reinforced by concrete and guarded by a look-out tower.

The compound, painted a light peach colour, was L-shaped with a long dormitory building and a gymnasium that had also been used for storage. A four-storey tower rose from the middle, and there were observation areas on two corners.

An underground bunker is believed to have been built beneath one end of the complex.

"They have underground passages there," Ted Royster, a special agent for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, said while the siege was in progress. "The group had the compound very heavily fortified."

Men's sleeping quarters were on the ground floor of the dormitory wing, with women's quarters upstairs. Mr Koresh's quarters were on the second floor of a section connecting the dormitory wing and the gymnasium.

Sharif takes fight to the people

FROM JANE MACARTNEY IN ISLAMABAD

MIAN Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan's sacked prime minister, asked the High Court yesterday to block dissolution of the National Assembly and vowed to take his battle on to the streets. Meanwhile, President Ishaq Khan asked Balakh Sher Mazari, the caretaker prime minister, to ensure elections called for July 14 are fair.

"We will fight this out in every nook and cranny of the country," Mr Sharif told several thousand cheering supporters a day after the president dismissed him for alleged nepotism, subversion and terrorism. "If I have committed a crime let them challenge me in court," he said in an interview. He moved out of the plush prime minister's house overlooking Islamabad yesterday.

The High Court in Rawalpindi accepted a petition from Gohar Ayub Khan, the former National Assembly Speaker, challenging the president's order dissolving the lower house and calling a general election. A hearing is set for today. "We think the prospects are very bright," Mr Ayub Khan said. In his petition, he said the president's decision "steps out of all the parameters set forth for the dissolution of the National Assembly."

"We will win the election,"

Mr Sharif said. "We have the support of the whole nation... the whole nation will rise up." He said he would launch street protests in Punjab, his home province, tomorrow.

He attacked Benazir Bhutto, the opposition leader and former prime minister, whose last-minute declaration of support for the president on Sunday gave her one-time foe the political clout to dump his former protégé. "Benazir Bhutto was the champion of democracy, and when the time came here to champion democracy she was away in London," Mr Sharif said. Miss Bhutto returned to Islamabad on Sunday after six weeks in London to give birth to her third child.

Mr Sharif enraged the president when he tried in February to modify legislation from the martial law era that empowers the president to dissolve the National Assembly and appoint armed forces chiefs of staff. Miss Bhutto decided then not to offer Mr Sharif her 42 votes in the 217-member National Assembly to back his modification, thus sealing his political death warrant. Her reward was the installation of Farooq Leghari, her deputy, as one of two new ministers and the promise of at least ten ministries in the

three-month interim government in the run-up to the elections.

"We decided that at a time of crisis the way to resolve it is to go to the people," Miss Bhutto said. "That is why we decided to support the cause of fresh elections."

In a 90-minute meeting, the president told Mr Mazari, a veteran politician and landlord from Punjab, to take immediate steps to "restore the people's confidence in the country's administration", a government statement said. The president pointed out that the first and foremost task before the caretaker government was to make foolproof arrangements for holding free, fair and impartial general elections, it said. The prime minister assured the president that the best of his own and his cabinet's attention and energies would be devoted to matters concerning the holding of elections and the improvement of general administration. Opposition parties had been demanding fresh elections saying the 1990 elections, won by Mr Sharif's Islamic Democratic Alliance, were widely rigged.

In Lahore, Mr Sharif's home town, about 1,500 supporters marched through the streets, chanting: "Remove the



Sharif: claims he has support of the nation

president". "Long live democracy" and "Down with dictatorship". The protesters burned tyres to block a portion of the city centre before dispersing peacefully.

Mr Sharif's ambitious economic reform programme is likely to be shattered by his dismissal, economists and businessmen said yesterday. The stock market plunged 36.98 points, one of the biggest falls in its history, to close at a record low of 1069.79. (Reuters)

Bulgarian killed in Cambodia

FROM REUTERS
IN PHNOM PENH

A BULGARIAN soldier serving with United Nations peacekeeping forces in Cambodia was killed yesterday when a grenade hit their vehicle as they rushed to relieve a village under Khmer Rouge attack.

He was the ninth peacekeeper, four of them Bulgarian, to be killed in Cambodia in the past three weeks. The Bulgarians' armoured personnel carrier was hit by an anti-tank grenade when it entered the village of New Orail in Kompong Spee province 20 miles from Phnom Penh, a spokesman for the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (Untac) told reporters.

Khmer Rouge guerrillas attacked the village in Samrong Tong district for two hours on Monday morning with mortars, automatic weapons and B-40 rockets, Eric Falk, a UN spokesman said.

He said the Khmer Rouge was apparently trying to attack government forces in the village. Because the village houses a UN district headquarters, two armoured personnel carriers were sent to relieve it.

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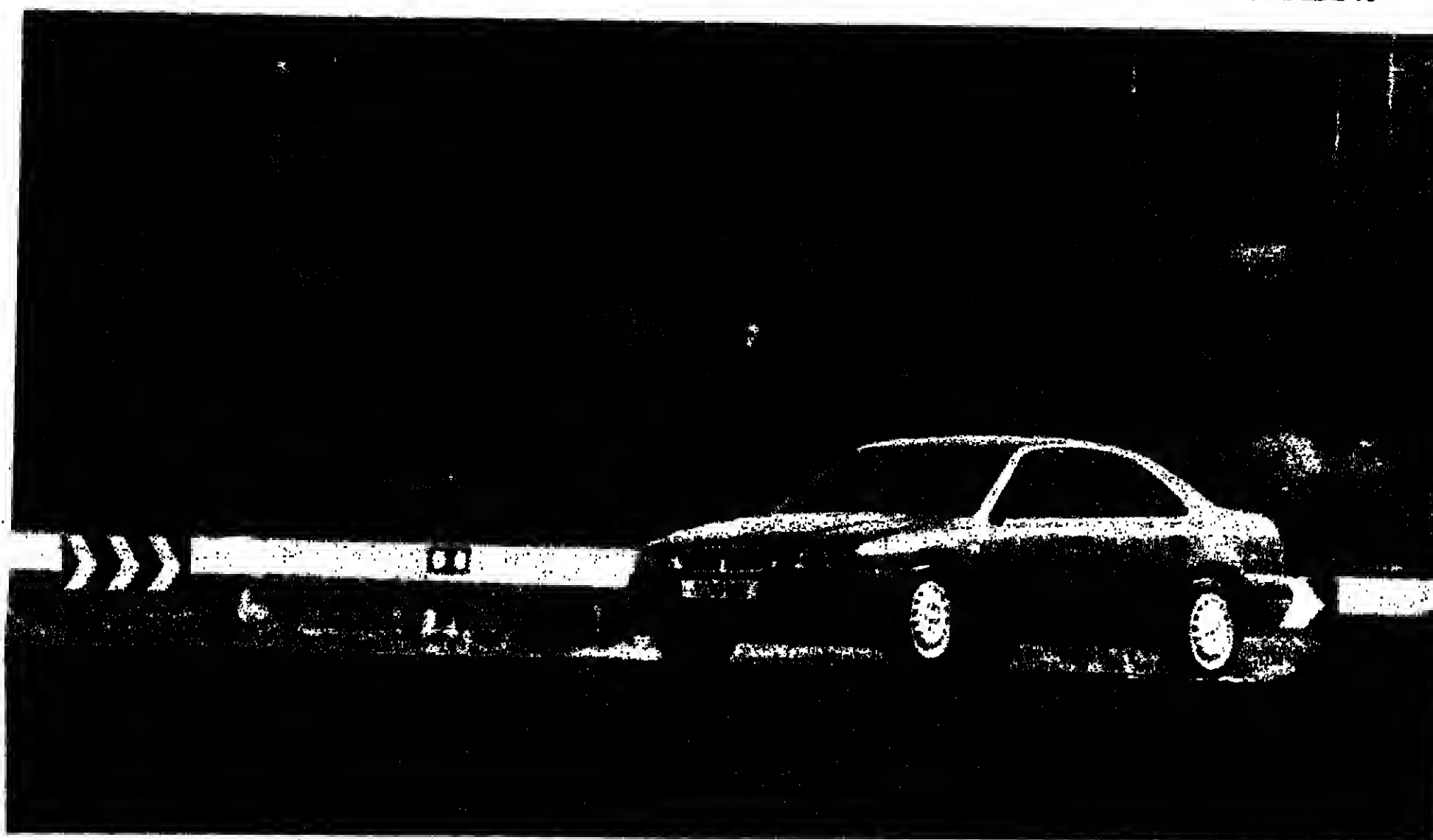
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As the civil war reaches a new level of bloodshed, some opinion-formers are changing their views

Should we use force in Bosnia?



Lord Healey Defence Secretary 1964-70:
"I am against military intervention. I have held this view from the start. I feel every bit as strongly as I ever did that air strikes would be a grave error. Innocent civilians would almost certainly be hit. We should beware the temptation to oversimplify the conflict and paint the Bosnian Serbs as the only aggressors. The UN should put peacekeeping troops into Kosovo, the predominantly Albanian enclave in southern Serbia, and Macedonia. Should fighting break out there, other Balkan nations will be drawn into a much more serious conflict."



The Right Rev Tom Butler Bishop of Leicester:
"Recent events have not led me to any conclusion, but they have focused my mind. The traditional ingredients for Christian participation in a just war is to make sure that the just side wins. The choice is stark: have the West the commitment to sufficient force to make the Serbs come to a just agreement? If they haven't got that commitment then it may be better to admit that, so the Bosnian Muslims can decide whether to surrender or not. What is distressing is that the West is sending signals that there will be support, but in the end it may be inadequate."



Baroness Warnock Mistress of Gorton College 1985-91:
"The pictures I have seen over the last few days have made me feel terrible, but they still don't make me see what the proper solution is. We may be forced to do something we would not have chosen to do, but I would rather we worked under the auspices of the UN. There is no point adopting a heroic attitude: if we do go in it will be as a grinding necessity and will be very painful. I don't put much faith in sanctions. I can't think of a single occasion when they have been effective. If I were John Major I would carry on to the last possible minute."



Norman Stone Professor of Modern History at Oxford:
"I think at a certain point one has to say that the moral considerations have to take account of realities on the ground. I don't actually agree about this in Bosnia, because if we look at the Gulf war, surely the mistake was to stop at Baghdad... We have seen other very effective wars being fought with extraordinarily limited casualties... There was a very revealing episode a couple of months ago when some Serbian planes fired at some of their own artillery in the hills around Sarajevo by mistake. The Serbs ran away, thinking they were being attacked by the Americans."



Major General Julian Thompson Commander Falklands war:
"We have now got to the stage where we must stay out because it is too late. We should have gone in right at the beginning when there was fighting in Slovenia and Croatia. In Bosnia I have always been of the non-interventionist school, unless we do it properly — which means a very, very large force indeed. Air strikes will not achieve anything. They will merely cause damage and kill quite a lot of innocent people. Arming the Muslims is perhaps the only way which has credibility, but there are practical difficulties."



Roger Scruton Conservative philosopher:
"It is certainly wrong to impose an arms embargo on the Muslims which prevents them from defending themselves. Everyone knows the embargo is being broken all the time to the Serbs by Greece and Russia. I don't necessarily think we should enter the conflict. There are two ways this can develop: one is one side winning and one is by achieving a balance by which the two sides can hold each other at bay. I'm for the second option, so they can offer a credible threat to each other. Things might never have got to this pass if we had armed them earlier."



Clare Short Labour MP for Birmingham Ladywood:
"Recent events have only deepened my sense of anger that we did not intervene earlier. From the very beginning I have called for action, from the disastrous recognition of Croatia, and the shelling of Sarajevo six months ago. People were saying we don't want a ground war and now it seems there is no alternative but to intervene. The failure of the UN is very destructive to our own self-interest. We do not want to see British soldiers risking their lives, but if we will not put our troops into risky situations, we might as well not have any."



Lord Hailsham Former Lord Chancellor:
"I would counsel against listening to those with loud mouths and no military experience. Before I would consider intervention against the Bosnian Serbs a series of key questions would need answering: what are we trying to do; what troops are available; how would they get there; what would constitute success; and how would we get out. I agree with Lord Healey on this. We were both serving soldiers and know that war is licensed butchery. There are grave dangers in supporting those who believe that the war can be ended once the US cavalry appears."



Bishop Crispian Hollis Bishop of Portsmouth:
"I have just returned from Croatia and my experiences there have certainly changed my views. Before then I saw the conflict as a civil war, which we should not get involved in now I realise it's a war of aggression by Serbia to expand its territories. Now I believe there should be selective military action and very severe sanctions, and the sooner the better, it's absurd that we are being held up by the Russian referendum."



Admiral of the Fleet Lord Leighton Chief of Defence Staff 1979-82:
"I take the military view. We have got nothing to gain and everything to lose by intervening. I can understand Lady Thatcher's feelings but she no longer has access to intelligence: she is speaking without professional advice. It is crazy to arm the Muslims. If we announce an intention of doing so the Serbs will immediately step up their action and the headlines will be raised by ten more notches. This is an entirely political matter, which can't be solved by military means. The politicians should get on with solving it."



Mgr Bruce Kent Former chair of CND:
"What has surprised me recently is the number of people advocating intervention in Bosnia who opposed it during the Gulf war. I don't understand why this is the place we have to invade when there are conflicts all over the world. I don't believe in a military solution, but in a political one. I don't think the Owen-Vance plan is the answer, as it is unacceptable to the Croats and the Serbs. We need to listen to some voices from Serbia. Partition is a reasonable answer: it has worked in Cyprus and India."



Julia Neuberger, rabbi and human rights campaigner:
"Recent events have not changed my views, but they have made them firmer, as we stand idly by and watch the government saying we mustn't intervene. How much worse can it become? What I would like to see is some kind of international force sent in, preferably including the Russians. I think we can't stand by any longer. I'm not wholly happy about arming the Muslims, but I think we will have to do that too. If we don't we will see ethnic cleansing of the kind that is wiping out the Muslims on a widespread scale. It's a moral imperative."



Lord Chalfont Foreign Office Minister 1964-70:
"I am against intervention. My views have remained unchanged since the beginning of the Bosnian civil war. There should be no further military intervention in Bosnia. We got into this because there was no strategic conception of what such action might involve. No more ground forces should be committed, and there should be no air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs either. Since the end of the Cold War the UN has been going beyond the terms of its remit. It could be strongly argued that it has been interfering in the affairs of sovereign nations."



General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley Commander in Chief of the Allied Forces in Northern Europe 1979-82:
"We should have made an armed intervention a year ago, between the Croats and the Bosnian Serbs, and the case is even stronger now. We should intervene on moral grounds. There is a self-interest for Europe here: we seem blind to the fact that there is rising exasperation in the Muslim world that the Christian community only throws up its hands at this oppression of Muslim people, and this will rebound to our disadvantage. People will be killed, but that argument can be applied to every situation."



Sir Anthony Parsons Britain's UN representative 1979-1982:
"I have favoured confronting the Bosnian Serbs within the context of the UN from the outset of the civil war. Such action should be aimed at severing supply lines with Serbia itself. The UN fell between two stools at the outset of the civil war. Sanctions have failed to bite and the Bosnian Serbs have realised that the prospect of meaningful military intervention is beyond the initial remit of the peacekeepers. Should the UN continue on the present road there is the risk of a real loss of authority."



Liz Lynne Liberal Democrat MP for Rochdale:
"My views have been confirmed rather than affected by recent events. I have been calling for further action for months. I could see that what was happening was similar to the Holocaust. I'm very grateful now that it seems something will be done, but I don't think it will be enough. All the same I am glad that the government and the Opposition realise that there is a tremendous problem there. I would like to see UN troops protecting the Bosnian Muslims with air strikes."

Interviews by Bill Frost and Julia Llewellyn Smith

In Washington, a new government braces itself to make war in the Balkans

In Paris, a new government makes its excuses

A growing taste for the battlefield

William Safire, the acerbic New York Times columnist, always entertains. Consider yesterday's offering, in which he suggested three reasons for President Clinton's refusal to respond forcefully to "the sustained slaughter in Bosnia and the mocking gratitude of the Serbian war criminals".

The first, he said, was the poor company the president keeps. "George Bush had the benefit of Margaret Thatcher's rent-a-spine agency; Bill Clinton is afflicted with the umbrella diplomacy of Mr Wobbling himself. Britain's John Major, who is taking the 'special' out of the 'special relationship'."

"Next, he is a prisoner of the polls (who wants to die for Danzig or Sarajevo?)... Finally he is the captive of his post-Vietnam multilateral rhetoric, so taken with fear of going it alone that he is incapable of going first and pushing and shoving others into going along." The result, said Mr Safire, was that "we have meaningless sanctions, useless no-fly zones, publicly-stunt airdrops and UN relief convoys turned back while the Serbs go about talking while killing."

On the same page was a column by Anthony Lewis, as liberal as Mr Safire is conservative. "Fifty years after the Nazis," it began, "will a Euro-

pean state led by a murderous demagogue be allowed to slaughter and expel another people because of their religion?... Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia calculated from the beginning that the Europeans and Americans would wring their hands, say tut-tut and do nothing. So far he has been exactly right."

Add the centrist Leslie Gelb, who evidently took Sunday off, and you have the triad of New York Times columnists who have been banging away for months about the need to "do something" in Bosnia. Their

shrieks of indignation have amused, irritated and occasionally infuriated, but little more. Now their views are rapidly becoming orthodox. Lady Thatcher's moral outrage on America's three big breakfast television shows last Wednesday undoubtedly proved the conscience of a nation that has traditionally considered protection of the weak its duty. Suddenly there is a clamour for action in Washington.

"It's a shame. All we're doing is standing by while the Serbs mop up Bosnia and divide it into 11 little pieces and slaughter all the women and children," Bob Dole, the Senate's Republican minority leader, declared on Sunday. He called for arming Bosnia's Muslims and bombing the Serbs to end a "pretty dark chapter in American history".

George Mitchell, the Senate's Democratic majority leader, echoed Mr Dole's call for arming the Bosnians and bombing the Serbs. Joseph Biden, a leading Democratic member of the Senate foreign relations committee just back from Bosnia, was recommending those measures at a meeting with Mr Clinton yesterday. Susan Molinari, Bill Paxon and Peter King, three Republican congressmen who have also been in Bosnia, demanded the same steps in a letter to Mr Clinton that declared: "Our nation must bring the world community to immediate action. We must end the all-too-numerous platitudes and act."

The administration itself has been in a terrible dither. It ruled out force one moment and ruled it in the next, postponed then accelerated a UN vote on tighter sanctions. It has been constrained on the one hand by Boris Yeltsin's weakness. British and French caution and US military squeamishness, on the other by a sense of moral imperative and a desire to fulfil Mr Clinton's campaign rhetoric. Until now those pressures

were finely balanced. No longer. The columnists and congressmen appear to be merely reinforcing a new presidential resolve. Srebrenica's de facto surrender has highlighted Western impotence and damaged the Vance-Owen peace plan which Mr Lewis had labelled the West's last remaining "fig-leaf". Mr Clinton declared himself "outraged" at the Serbs' refusal to sign it. He called on the allies to consider actions to halt the Serbs that "previously have been unacceptable". He held what the White House diplomatically described as a "frank" conversation with John Major on Sunday, and was yesterday preparing to call President Mitterrand.

Afflicted by a sense of shame, there is a growing tendency in Washington to blame Britain and France for the West's impotence. "Our European allies don't want to do anything and, therefore, it's a very difficult dilemma," said Mr Mitchell on Sunday. It may be too late for eastern Bosnia, but Sarajevo is not yet lost. The talk in Washington is of the relative merits of bombing Serbian supply routes, artillery positions or power stations. If the arms embargo is lifted, the Senate has already approved military help to Bosnia's Muslims.

There is another event taking place in Washington this week that seems likely to weaken still further the voices of those who counsel caution. It is the opening amid enormous fanfare of the US Holocaust Museum, which charts in devastating detail not only the inexorable building of German anti-Semitism to the "final solution", but America's relative indifference.

As he enters, Mr Clinton will see the words of America's last Democratic president, Jimmy Carter, during whose term the museum was commissioned: "Out of our memory... of the Holocaust we must forge an unshakable oath with all civilised people that never again will the world stand silent, never again will the world fail to act in time to prevent this crime of genocide."

MARTIN FLETCHER

Leaders lose the appetite for action

Edouard Balladur and Jacques Chirac think bombing is probably the best way of stopping the Serbian onslaught in Bosnia. At least, that was what they were saying until about a month ago, when President Mitterrand's socialists were still running France and before Mr Chirac's Gaullist party won the elections and Mr Balladur became prime minister. Now they take the more pallid path of diplomacy which they found so reprehensible when practised by their predecessors.

On Sunday, an uncomfortable-looking M Balladur could be found on television warning the Serbs that "we cannot accept that Sarajevo should be threatened even the faintest bit" and that "we must absolutely obtain a halt in the fighting" while at the same time "doing everything to ensure that our soldiers are not put in impossible situations". A reminder of his past views on force produced an embarrassed silence.

The weekend's new embargo and the UN-managed surrender of Srebrenica were greeted with weary sorrow by both pro-government and opposition commentators and also by back-bench parliamentarians. "Total Serbian victory once again," said the centre-left *Libération* in a sarcastic commentary on the ceasefire deal. The Serbians were now aware that "the next time round people might get really angry", it said.

The pro-Gaullist *Figaro* called the latest events "too little too late". The only hope, it suggested, was to wait for President Clinton to put his hints of force into action. "In the meantime, the dead belong to the dead, the wounded, the orphans and the raped women belong to our pity and Greater Serbia belongs to the Serbs." In a blistering editorial yesterday, *Le Monde* said the Serbs had "once again dictated their law and obtained

what they wanted", while the West contented itself with ed-mondishments. One of the most "terrifying" images of the weekend, it said, was that of General Philippe Morillon, the French UN commander, sitting at a well-stocked table celebrating Orthodox Easter with Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader.

In a comparison which was widespread this week, *Le Journal du Dimanche* compared the plight of Srebrenica with that of the Warsaw ghetto, where the uprising took place

virtual harmony with President Mitterrand over the unacceptable drawbacks to the use of arms to halt Serbian actions.

The Gulf between public emotion and political reality has left an especially bitter taste in France because of the Gaullists' failure to live up to their talk and the erosion of hopes that M Mitterrand's personal diplomacy, which began with his lightning trip to Sarajevo last June, would achieve something. For months last year it seemed the humanitarian drive led by Dr Kouchner, and embodied in the 5,000-strong French contingent in former Yugoslavia, proved that France was not impotent and indifferent to the suffering. By Christmas, however, disillusion had set in and the media, opposition and public opinion moved in favour of undefined force.

For the public and members of the Paris intellectual classes alike the cynicism of realpolitik has been symbolised by the row over General Morillon. One of the first acts of the new government was to confirm rumours that he was about to be recalled. His superiors were said to have been angered by his growing celebrity. On Sunday, M Balladur reversed course, saying his withdrawal was "not on the agenda".

The most powerful voice calling France to its conscience has been that of Jean-François Deniau, the senior parliamentarian. He said: "Europe is in the process of totally losing its soul in Yugoslavia... We are watching before our eyes in 1993 something which no-one could have believed possible since the middle ages — cities under siege, bombarded, starved until the population surrenders. And all of it in the application of a theory which we thought had been condemned forever."

CHARLES BREMNER



Kouchner, comparison with the Warsaw ghetto

50 years ago this week, Bernard Kouchner, the former humanitarian action minister, also drew the Warsaw comparison, but he said the UN's timid actions were at least a start on a long road to preventing war.

The new government is making much of the fact that French warplanes are policing the skies over Bosnia and that France convened the weekend session of the UN Security Council. Pressing for the new sanctions, Alain Juppé, the foreign minister, denounced Serbian "barbarism and inhumanity" in Bosnia and proclaimed: "That's enough!" He noted that "the world community has been cowardly" towards Serbian actions in Bosnia and that Serbia was taking the United Nations for fools. However M Juppé and the prime minister are now in

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THE TIMES TUESDAY APRIL 20 1993

Women in the shadow of death

A new cancer screening offers hope to thousands, says Aileen Ballantyne

Anne Thompson believes she has just cheated death. As a result of a new experimental screening test for ovarian cancer she discovered she had the disease at the earliest possible stage, while it can still successfully be treated.

She is one of the 5,000 women who develop ovarian cancer every year in the United Kingdom. For most of them, the knowledge that they have the disease comes too late. Within five years of diagnosis two thirds of them are dead.

Nearly 18 months ago Mrs Thompson's mother, Maria Connolly, died of ovarian cancer. Like most victims, she was in her fifties. But she had a particularly well informed doctor, who knew that relatives of ovarian cancer victims carry an increased risk. She suggested that both Anne and her sister volunteer for a research study at King's College Hospital, London, where doctors were looking for a method of detecting the disease early.

Mrs Thompson, 30, became one of 2,000 volunteers to take part in a £500,000, five-year study, financed by the Imperial Cancer Research Fund. When the results of the ongoing study were announced in the *British Medical Journal* at the weekend, they showed that, in all, five women had their cancer picked up in the earliest stage by ultrasound screening. This enables doctors to detect potentially dangerous cysts which had until recently been invisible because the ovaries are located deep within the abdomen.

Mrs Thompson, a driving instructor, is angry that the screening is not available for all women who have a close relative with the disease. "I may well owe my life to the fact that my mother died," she says. "But it was only a matter of chance that I ended up being screened."

The early diagnosis forced Mrs Thompson to make the difficult choice between increasing her chances of survival and having a child. Almost a year ago, after scanning had picked up a suspicious cyst which proved to be cancerous, surgeons removed the affected ovary. She continued to travel from her home in Wrexham to London for regular screening. But a few months ago, Mrs Thompson and her husband decided that the anxiety and disruption was too great and opted for the removal of the second ovary and a hysterectomy to reduce the chances of the cancer recurring.

Mrs Thompson, who takes hormone replacement therapy to counter the effects of the early menopause brought on by the removal of both ovaries, returned to work within two months of surgery. She has no regrets about her decision. "I can get on with my life now. And it's a good life," she says. "There's no point in having a child if you don't live to see that child grow up."

The doctors who headed the King's study, Professor William Collins and Professor Stuart Campbell, believe their new findings show that women with a close relative with ovarian cancer should be offered an NHS ultrasound screening at least every two years. Such women account for up to one in six cases of all ovarian cancer in this country and have an overall lifetime risk of developing ovarian cancer of about one in 13, compared with the average woman's risk of about one in 66.

Taking part in a study such as the one at King's also has the advantage of highlighting the much smaller number of women, who, like Mrs Thompson, are at even higher risk because more than one close relative has developed ovarian cancer. Her mother's sister also recently died of the disease in her fifties. For such women there is little doubt that the benefits of regular screening far outweigh the risks. However, some doctors believe that for women with only one close relative with the disease, the position is less clear. They argue that such women may have to undergo unnecessary abdominal surgery for the benign, harmless cysts that would also be picked up by screening.

The King's doctors reply with the argument that one cancer is picked up for every three investigative operations. In addition, Dr Collins, professor of reproductive biology at King's, says that, in most cases, where non-cancerous cysts are picked up they would normally be removed in any case to prevent future complications.

In order to prove that this form of screening saves lives for all women, not only those with a close relative with the disease, doctors at King's and at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London, are now recruiting 4,000 women aged 55 to 64 to take part in a trial funded by the Medical Research Council of women with no known risk factors. As in all such trials, half the women who volunteer will be screened using the new method while half will not, and the progress of both groups will be monitored.

The King's doctors believe that such a trial, in which half the women are not offered screening, would be unethical for higher risk women known to have one close relative with the disease.

Dr Campbell, professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at King's, stresses that there is now strong circumstantial evidence that catching ovarian cancer while it is still within the outer layer of the ovary and has not "seeded" into the abdominal cavity gives a very high chance of successful treatment.

"If you remove it at an early stage the chances of a complete cure are very good indeed," he says. "We now have a screening technique which allows us to see the ovaries and see the cancer developing. It is very exciting."



Cheating death: Mrs Thompson says "it was only a matter of chance that I ended up being screened"

ON a stark mathematical analysis, saving Mrs Thompson's life was extremely expensive: about £100,000, given that the entire programme cost £500,000 and five early cancers were detected. But that was not the only point of the research. Its ultimate aim was to come up with a screening tool which could be effectively used for all women. Early estimates suggest that, for each year of a woman's life saved by this form of ovarian cancer screening, the cost to the NHS would be £1,800.

This compares with cervical cancer at £2,300 and breast cancer at £900 per year of life saved. Cervical cancer kills about 1,900 women every year in Britain, while ovarian cancer kills nearly 4,500 and breast cancer kills more than 15,000.

Research suggests that women with no children or only one child are likely to be more at risk of ovarian cancer. In addition, women who have never taken the contraceptive pill, which prevents ovulation, are at higher risk. This is thought to be because when a woman ovulates every month, the release of the egg somehow causes progressive damage to the surface of the ovary. One study, whose results remain controversial, also suggests that women who have taken ovary stimulating drugs as part of infertility treatment may be at slightly higher risk.

Halcyon nights are here again

The banned sleeping pill could again be available on prescription after new evidence on its side-effects emerges

A committee appointed by Virginia Bottomley has been offered fresh evidence on the relative safety of the sleeping pill Halcyon, it is reported in *Mims*, the medical journal. This is likely to result in the health secretary lifting the ban on the use of the drug in Britain, which will be only the second time that such action has been taken.

Two million prescriptions a year were written by British doctors for Halcyon before its withdrawal in 1991. Halcyon (the generic name is triazolam) was the world's best selling sleeping pill before there were scares, which now seem grossly exaggerated, about possible after-effects of taking it. Halcyon is one of the benzodiazepine group of drugs (including Valium), which took the place of the barbiturates as the most commonly used preparations to treat anxiety and sleeplessness.

There is no argument that Halcyon's short action — effective for less than six hours when given in standard dosage — resulted in a patient who was alert and free of the hangover effect the following day. An undimmed concentration and freedom from drowsiness the next day was invaluable to those who had to negotiate, drive or operate machinery for their living.

Halcyon's opponents claimed that it, more than other benzodiazepines, tended to induce a paradoxical rebound increase in hostility and aggression the following day. The patients, its critics said, might be alert but they suffered from over-excitement, loss of memory and sleeplessness the next night. A loss of inhibition and the expression of opinions, which, from the patient's point of view would be better left unsaid, was the least of the anti-social actions which were laid at the door of Halcyon. (It is rarely wise to let either your chairman or brother-in-law know your opinion of their characters. Let alone strike them.)

Other people, supported by their lawyers searching for a defence, claimed that Halcyon had led them to attempt murder, and even commit murder and rape. In fact, these symptoms could be precipitated in any very tense and disturbed patient who is sufficiently sedated to reduce inhibition, but not sedated enough to be tranquil.

Much of the original research work done on the side-effects of Halcyon was based on very small groups of patients. Some of the studies that have been much



DR THOMAS STUTTAFORD

quoted by politicians and lawyers, and recycled in other medical journals, were based on a dozen or fewer cases — a negligible quantity when compared with the two million annual prescriptions in Britain, and a world market of more than £100m.

A recent study of medical records of 1,193 patients showed that 24 per cent of those who were prescribed Halcyon had complained to their GPs of side-effects. In 1991, however, when the drug was withdrawn, 32 per cent of those who had been happy taking Halcyon complained of side-effects from the substitutes. Other studies show that the rate of side-effects is very similar whatever benzodiazepine is used.

Upjohns, the manufacturers of Halcyon, in their advice to doctors on its use, could not have been more specific. Halcyon, like all the benzodiazepines, is useful for transient sleep disorders, but it should not be prescribed to treat long-term chronic insomnia. Insomnia is such a common symptom in those who are mentally disturbed that it is not surprising that sleeping pills are often blamed for unwanted symptoms, whereas the fault truly lies in the patient's personality.

Benzodiazepines are not recommended for use in patients with a phobic, obsessional or addictive personality, or for those who have any obvious psychosis. If any drug is to have a pharmacological action, there are some people, somewhere, who will develop side-effects, real or imaginary; this disadvantage had to be matched against the drug's usefulness for the thousands who might benefit.

The depressed patient who is sleepless, usually suffering from early-morning waking, will be made worse by sleeping pills and needs an anti-depressant. The agitated patient with schizophrenic tendencies who turns night into day needs a major tranquilliser, not a sleeping pill.

Sleeping pills should never be used for more than 10 to 12 days at a time, and preferably only taken occasionally for use by those who suffer from a transient cause of sleeplessness; for instance, while travelling or in a strange bed. Normally, insomniacs should rely on a good sleep routine, no late meals or late drinking, no coffee, and music as a lullaby, or, perhaps, the BBC World Service, which is interesting enough to block anxious thoughts, but not so exciting as to keep the patient awake.

Doctors are sick of night call-outs, says James Le Fanu

GPs out of patience

According to a survey published this month 99 per cent of family doctors are "unhappy with their lot" and suffering from "low morale". Articulating this discontent, Dr Ian Bogle, a public spokesman, was reported in the newspaper *General Practitioner*. "Very many GPs of my age are just counting the days to retirement, while the younger ones are wondering what on earth they have let themselves in for."

Leaving aside the obvious rejoinder — who, after all, is really happy with their lot? — this is, by any criterion an interesting statistic that requires some explanation. The essence of the doctors' disillusionment is aggravation underlined by two further recently released sets of statistics: the number of night calls has risen fivefold in the last 25 years while the number of complaints against GPs has risen by a third in the last five years alone.

As "failure to visit" is one of the commonest reasons for a complaint to be made, these two statistics are clearly related. Typically, a parent rings around midnight demanding his child with a temperature be visited. When the GP tactfully suggests that perhaps some Calpol might help, he is told: "My son needs antibiotics and if you don't come out, there will be hell to pay."

Manipulative patients have subtle ways of getting the doctor out of bed by evoking symptoms suggestive of some serious illness like meningitis: "His head hurts a lot, doc and he can't stand the light." By the time the doctor comes knocking on the door the child is sleeping soundly.

Clearly the delicate balance of power in the doctor-patient relationship has shifted, so that the public are much less hesitant about evoking their rights (which includes

Nurses on the dole

Three years' intensive training is getting them nowhere

Most little girls given a nurse's kit by some well-meaning, unpolitically-correct relative spend hours knocking their dolls over the head, smothering them in tomato ketchup and wrapping them up in bandages. By the time they get to 18 most have decided that nursing is more likely to mean cleaning out bedpans and curing people's toenails than the more glamorous task of saving lives — and become solicitors, secretaries or civil servants instead.

Sharon McVey didn't. "My nursing training has been the best three years of my life. It was hard work bathing people, talking to mental patients and being shouted at by doctors. But I could stop people crying and for the first time in my life I had a talent," she says.

Last week she was told she had passed her final exams but there have been no staff vacancies for newly-qualified nurses for six months at North Devon district hospital, in Barnstaple, near Ilfracombe, where she lives and no jobs are in the offing. As a single mother with two school-age children, moving is not practicable. The nearest acute hospital is 60 miles away in Exeter and there are no vacancies there.

The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has said that millions of pounds have been wasted training nurses who now have no prospect of work.



Thin prospects: after all her training Sharon McVey will be lucky to find work doing sporadic locum shifts

Colleges have recruited thousands too many students in the absence of central guidance in the new-style health service where self-governing trust hospitals decide staff levels.

"Only four years ago there was such a dearth of nurses the health department launched a £4.5 million recruitment campaign on television costing £20,000 for every student who signed up," says Michelle Rumsey, the RCN's student association officer.

A nurse's three-year training costs at least £36,000. The health department says that better pay and conditions have caused the problems by vastly reducing staff turnover. The colleges say nursing has suddenly become more attractive in the recession.

The junior nurses themselves are horrified. Most still feel that they went into nursing for altruistic reasons and are being punished unjustly. In June Ms McVey will have to leave the ward where she has spent 18 months. If she is lucky there will be sporadic shifts with the hospital's locum system. Karen Lockhart-Wood, 21, a former dental surgery assistant, is now in her final year at Lothian College of Nursing in Scotland. "People will always fall ill so I never worried about the future," she says.

Six out of 30 of the most recently qualified nurses have now got a job. Miss Lockhart-Wood qualifies in October. "We couldn't expect to get out of the recession soot-free but after all that work it's gutting. It makes it almost impossible to study for your exams."

The worst-hit areas seem to be Scotland, Northern Ireland, North East, North West, South East, South West, Thames and the West Midlands. Many nursing colleges in these areas appear resigned that seven out of ten newly-qualified nurses will not find jobs immediately.

Angela O'Flaherty, 26, studied biochemistry at university in Belfast and is now in her final year at the Northern Area College, Northern Ireland. "I became disillusioned by cold-natured research and wanted to work with people. But the morale is appalling: only four jobs for qualifying nurses have come up in Northern Ireland since Christmas."

The RCN has launched The Nurses' Campaign to help nurses at all levels cope with change and unemployment and to lobby for changes that include a guaranteed six months' work after qualification to consolidate skills.

The German and American health authorities have been advertising for qualified nurses. Some nurses are applying to holiday camps and to do voluntary work for charities. Ms O'Flaherty says: "I would apply to nursing homes but the Community Care bill means people are hiring super home helps instead. It seems a terrible false economy. Nurses are good value for money but six years down the line we will have forgotten everything."

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Lynne Truss



■ Before becoming an accident statistic, I'd like the free jacket. Some chance

I suppose we all grow up labouring under false impressions. A well-meaning adult metes out some ridiculous titbit of pseudo-information, we take it in, nourish it, remember it for decades, and then suddenly at the age of 35 blithely announce to a company of gape-faced strangers at a dinner party, "Isn't it amazing to think that it takes 29 hours for food to reach the stomach?" or "The little man in my tummy will be busy with this lot, shovelling the solids one way and the liquids the other!" I am not for a moment suggesting that everyone has shared these particular delusions (my little man looked like a Freemason, in a spattered bowler hat; my point is that we are deeply vulnerable to misleading data if we learn it early enough).

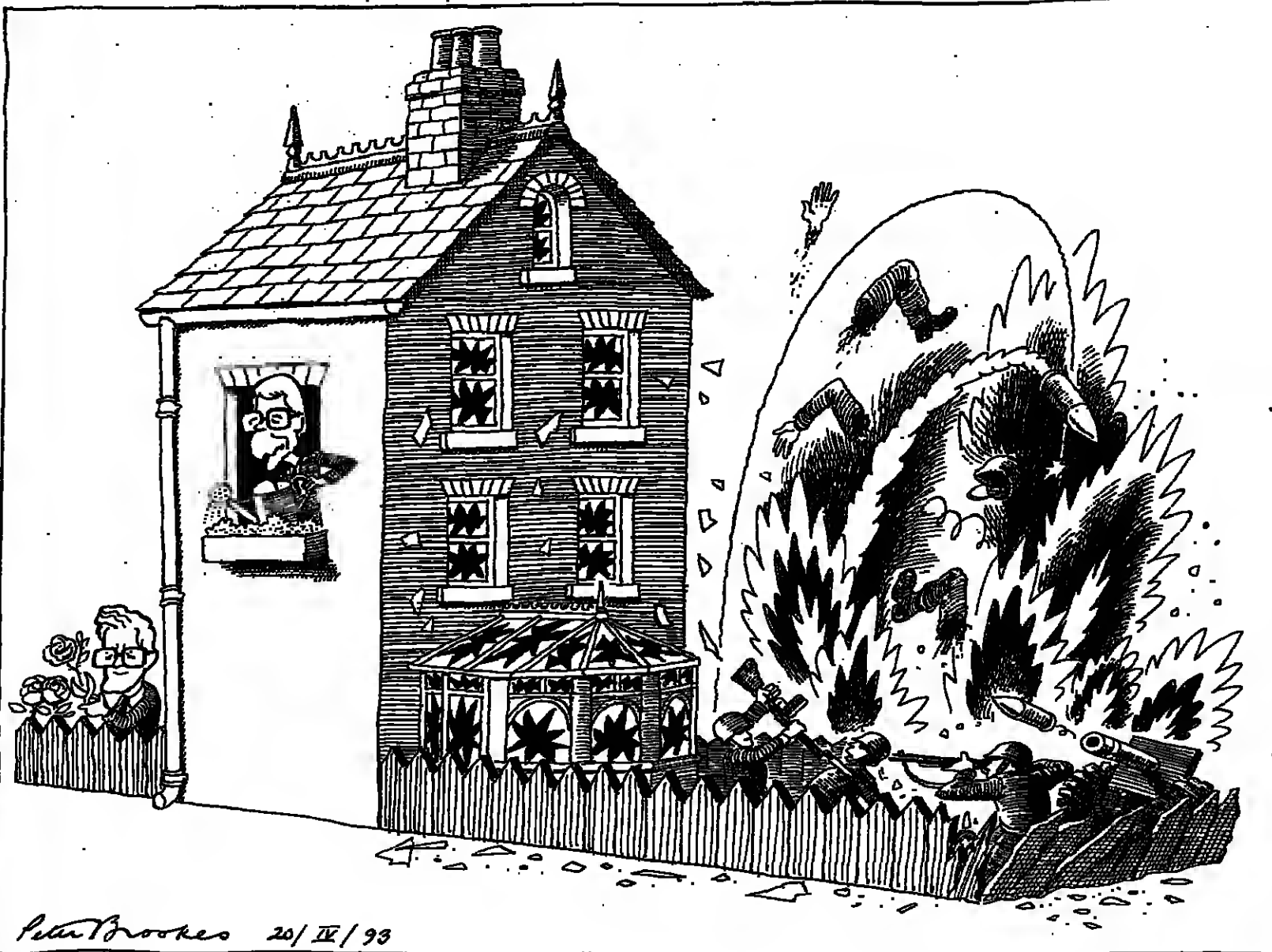
Looking back, my own particular grievance is against the exclamation, "You're more likely to be run down by a bus!" It is a peculiar statement, I know; but I can tell you it was a surefire way of belittling any anxiety deemed to be far-fetched. Cries of, "Mummy, come quick, I think my little man has fainted!" were routinely dismissed with this strange alarmist non sequitur entailing sudden mangled death under the screeching wheels of a double-decker Routemaster. It was meant to reassure, no doubt; but instead it left me with a lingering paranoia about buses ("Oh God, there are three coming at once!"), no sense of relative danger, and a distrust amounting to cynicism in statistical probability as a balm to unease.

"Worse things happen at sea," they told me; but I secretly thought, "How do you know?" and "So what?" Which is why it is odd, as a grown-up, to find that precisely the same useless statements are employed to pooh-pooh anyone alarmed by the idea of violent crime. More chance of being knocked down by a bus, exclaim the experts, ruffling knowledgeably through their sheaves of statistics, and making a little breeze — but it's still a non sequitur; it is still condescending; and in terms of one's imagination (which is unfortunately where fears hang on to reside), it still makes no sense whatsoever.

Take *Crimewatch*. At the end of last Thursday's programme, with its usual mix of real-life rapes and murders, Nick Ross, the presenter, made his routine plea for sanity: remember, he said, these violent crimes are very unusual, there is more chance of being involved in a road accident — and I was just smiling gratefully, and kicking myself for buying those expensive teeny-weeny personal rape alarms for the cats, when I suddenly thought hang on, I recognise this argument. It's something to do with the 265 to Ealing Broadway.

I mean, yes, it's true, we don't all go around worrying about road accidents, but what possible bearing does this have? Road accidents are horrible, but they are not frightening. That's the point. If one is affected by stories of violent crime, what scares you is that they happen, smack, out of the blue, with a shock of totality that transcends odds and percentages; but the significant thing is that they are not accidents. In cases of violent crime, extraordinary as it may seem, there is always the involvement of violent criminals. So it's personal. And because it's personal, it's scary. I agree that nobody wants to live in a climate of fear, and that we need a sense of proportion, but drawing a false analogy doesn't help.

More reassuring would be statistics that take this personal element into account. Why doesn't somebody calculate, for example, the relative likelihood of complete strangers — smack, out of the blue — being nice to you? Who knows, the chances of suffering a violent attack might turn out to be precisely the same as, I don't know, an assistant in a snooty designer clothes shop saying, "You've got to have that, madam, ah the hell with it, it's yours." One could live quite comfortably with this idea, I feel, because the remoteness of the possibility is something you can truly grasp. Forget the pile-ups, the marine disasters, those scarlet double-deckers bent on search-and-destroy. You could just think, "Hey, it's true, nobody ever gave me a free liner jacket. Perhaps the world is safer than I thought."



Peter Brookes 20/IV/93

What price an apology?

Far from accepting their culpability for the European Bank fiasco, officials now claim that the British are at fault

I did not suppose that I would return so soon to the story of Atali's Palace; indeed, I did not really expect to come back to it at all. Some aspects of the scandal, however, are so significant that I feel obliged to squelch back into the midden, though no clothes-peg on my nose — not even an iron one — could stifle the stench. (Now, I learn, Atali is squealing that it was not he who ordered millions spent on marble and such; I cannot remember who said "Blaming your subordinates is the last resort of a scoundrel.")

The snouts are still in the troughs, and the catalogue of swindles continues to unroll; the *Financial Times*, which originally broke the story, has been dishing more of the dirt. For instance, lesser organisations, when it comes to buying the desks, just order some useful — even handsome — desks and think no more about it. Chez Atali, we do it differently. Norman Foster, whose work does not come cheap (and why should it, when Atali and Pissaloux are happily shelling out as much money as is required), has designed a gleaming desk, all steel and glass — *très chic* — and 600 of them have been bought at something more than £600 each, thus notching up £360,000 or a bit over.

Next, a magic carpet. It has been designed in a large number of shades of green; this is because it was necessary — well, of course it was, you chaps — for the carpet to look the same colour whatever the lighting. Ah, but the floors, the floors! More than one and a quarter million pounds has gone on raising them, so that Atali and Pissaloux can walk upon 2,000 square metres of Italian white veined marble. (More marble, you see; do they have a thing about marble, Atali and Pissaloux?) And I nearly forgot the bar! It must be one hell of a bar, holding 100 chairs "representing European furniture throughout the century in the style of famous designers including Le Corbusier". But would Atali and Pissaloux kindly note that when they invite me for a drink I would rather not sit in the Le Corbusier chair? I don't like his architecture and I doubt that his chair would be comfortable.

Mind, don't strain yourselves to please me; anything coming from Marples will suffice, though I do realise that it wouldn't suffice Atali and Pissaloux.

But the best comes last. I think I had better quote it verbatim from the FT: The European Bank for Reconstruction

and Development approached the Corporation of London last autumn with a request that it should spend £1.5m on a temporary structure for the Bank's annual meeting... The bank drew up plans to build a large tented structure in Spitalfields, across the road from its Bishopsgate building in London. The proposals included a bridge, to be installed by helicopter, that would link the two buildings for the duration of the meeting, to provide extra security for its senior delegates (presumably that means Atali and Pissaloux and bugger the rest.)

The corporation, asked to provide the accommodation for the meeting as a welcoming gesture, rejected the proposal as too expensive. The corporation also rejected an earlier proposal to consider building a permanent conference centre, which could then be used for the Bank's meeting, on the Spitalfields site, at a cost of £14m.

And again, as last week, I stopped laughing.

This infamous, monomaniac, revolting gesture, its greed, vanity and self-importance crying to heaven for vengeance, would be bad enough if it were a matter of thieving if Atali and Pissaloux (and Ronald "Ron" Freeman — I shall introduce him to you in a moment) were crooks siphoning off the money. But not it is quite clear that not so much as a bent coin has gone into any unauthorised pocket, that none of them can have any fear from even the most searching audit, and consequently they can all go out of the building without a stain on their characters other than any they might have had upon them when they came in.

Yet some things, surely, amount to worse than theft. Because these people — Atali alone racked up £600,000 a year in hiring private planes, at £22,000 a sortie — were not stealing the money, they hypnotised themselves into truly believing that they could do anything with it.

Let us take a single item from the pile, neither better nor worse than a dozen such (it might have chosen, for instance,

the security barrier, described as "designed less to keep out predators than to impress visitors"), and look at it as an ordinary man or woman would. Atali and his lot paid, with other people's money, of course, to ensure that the doors inside the building were fit for him and his entourage.

You and I might think that a door is a door and if it opens and shuts satisfactorily there is no more to be said on the subject. Not Atali; his doors need joinery for the finest panelling, doorframes and the doors themselves, with "large amounts of crown-cut sycamore", and these touches cost no less than two-and-a-half million pounds.

The money was not Atali's, but it had been given to him, quite properly, to use. To use, that is, for the reason it had been given: to help the people of the East to rebuild their lives through projects that the money was to fund, and that sum — two-and-a-half million quid, remember — was part of those seeds, desperately needed. Now is it possible to get into the head of Atali that an ordinary person, faced with those facts, would conclude that he ought to be sacked immediately? Or, to put it another way, is there any ordinary person reading this who would not think that he should be sacked for such conduct?

Now let me, as I promised, introduce you to Mr Ronald ("Ron") Freeman, yet another head man of the bank (what with Atali and Pissaloux and Waigel and this one, they seem to breed like cockroaches, and some of them are just as charming). He epitomises what is perhaps the most striking and most odious aspect of this whole stinking story: the absolute refusal to apologise, to admit error, to take any measure of responsibility, to exhibit, or even to feel, shame.

In an interview with him by Margareta Pagano for *The Sunday Telegraph*, he used every excuse, every exculpation,

every shiftiness, every change of subject. "The shareholders didn't object," he whined. "The building was costly," he bleated. "All this will defuse energies which could be spent on the work we have to do," he sweated. "There is undoubtedly some political motivation to the criticism," he wailed. (There isn't.) But one word of remorse, one word of culpability, one word even of human error — no such word was employed.

There were, however, other words that he spoke, words which suggest that he was becoming desperate, and in desperation hardly realised what he was saying. Speaking of the building, he said: "If this had been fitted out with old linoleum I am sure people would have objected too. The British tend to believe that the more run-down something is the more wholesome it is. They like cold showers and cold porridge."

So it is we, the British people, who are the culprits in this noisome tale! Atali and Pissaloux and Freeman have fingered the villains: it was we British who wasted countless millions of pounds, whose unquenchable vanity demanded a palace of Travertine marble, and then changed our minds and installed Carrara. We British who threw away £750,000 of precious money to feed our hunger for notoriety, we British who declared that nothing was too good for Atali and Pissaloux and Freeman, we British who made excuses, who ran away, who cheered when Atali, the humble Atali, and Pissaloux, the modest Pissaloux, and Freeman, the noble Freeman, claimed their birthright — the use of other people's money, as much as they want, and in perpetuity.

Or possibly not. As you read this, Atali will be doctored with Theo Waigel, who as the chairman of the bank's governors is the only man who can sack Atali, and indeed sack the entire unwholesome crew. He won't, of course; it would be too shameful. But it is just possible that he will say, for the record, words that will make it very difficult for Atali and his minions to cling to office. Not, of course, because they would be ashamed to brazen it out, but because we — we, the despised British people, who are worth no more than cold porridge — will say to Atali, and go on saying to Atali, "Go away: you are not fit to sit at your £600 desk, so go. And when you go, take your creatures, Pissaloux and Freeman, with you."

Britain's ethnically divided peoples

■ Twenty-five years ago today, J. Enoch Powell made the controversial speech on immigration for which he was labelled "racialist" and dismissed from the shadow cabinet. Here, he defends his predictions and warns against the dangers of communalism

A sharp shift has taken place since 1968 in the focus of the problem of the New Commonwealth population in the United Kingdom.

So far as crude numbers are concerned, the census of 1991 verified my own "minimum figures" of a New Commonwealth population by the end of the century "working out at a little over 6 per cent" (Eastbourne, November 16, 1968), with a figure on census day 1991 which showed the proportion of the "ethnic minority" in the population of Great Britain to be 5.9 per cent already. It is, however, in another way that the census has emphasised the great change in focus that has taken place.

Because of the legislative struggle in 1960-68 to control immigration in the literal sense of the word, the emphasis had always been upon the crude annual total of arrivals. What escaped closer attention was the age structure of the new accretion to the population.

The census has shown a great disparity in the age structure of the two populations, which will continue to cause the relative size of the ethnic minority to increase as far ahead as it is worthwhile to look (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, *Population Trends No 71*, page 3). Accordingly, the focus of attention switches, as the years go by, from the original cause of growth, net immigration, to the continuing cause, age structure.

Given a substantial resident ethnic minority population, a trickle of real immigration must be expected to continue, a trickle which has nothing to do with policy or with illegal entry; but we have become prisoners of the past to this extent, that we are apparently fated to stay with the expressions "immigrant" and "immigration".

What happened in the 1950s and the 1960s, with the consequences of which we have to live for the foreseeable future, was due overwhelmingly to that piece of self-inflicted national hubbub, the British Nationality Act 1948. The Act secured that, as new independent states were carved out of the old colonial and Indian empires, their inhabitants would have the same right to enter and reside in the United Kingdom as its native inhabitants. There was no matching legislation on the part of the newly independent countries. Indeed, the legislation was a denial of the right to define one's own citizens as something logically inherent in the possession of autonomy.

Of course, when we saw the results, we repented and repealed the unrequited offer by passing the Commonwealth Immigrants Act, which came into effect in July 1962; but that was not until a resident population had been established here which was bound to increase exponentially.

The reality of the situation is obscured when population is expressed as a percentage proportion taken over the whole of the United Kingdom. The ethnic minority is geographically concentrated, so that areas in which it forms a majority already exist, and these areas are destined inevitably to grow.

It is here that the compatibility of such an ethnic minority with the functioning of parliamentary democracy comes into question. Parliamentary democracy depends at all levels upon the valid acceptance of majority decision, by which the nation as a whole is content to be bound because of the continually available prospect that what one majority has decided another majority can subsequently alter.

From this point of view, the political homogeneity of the electorate is crucial. What we do not, as yet, know is whether the voting behaviour of our altered population will be able to use the majority vote as a political instrument and not as a means of self-identification, self-assertion and self-enumeration.

It may be that the United Kingdom will escape the political consequences of communalism; but communalism, as the experience of India demonstrates, are incompatible. That is the spectre which the Conservative party's policy of assisted repatriation in the 1960s aimed to banish; but time and events have swept over and passed the already outdated remedies of the 1960s.

We are entering unknown territory where the only certainty for the future is the relative increase of the ethnic minority due to the age structure of that population which has been established. That is the real change of focus since 1968. Perhaps we could have foreseen this; but the census has planted it firmly in our lap.

The author was Minister of Health 1960-63.

Not glad to be grey

FOR a man who swore he would never resort to the image-makers, John Major appears to be relying more heavily on them than they might have hoped. It has emerged that the man behind the American-style televised press conferences planned for No. 10 is none other than Sir Gordon Reece, who in the early 1980s launched a new-look Margaret Thatcher on an unsuspecting public.

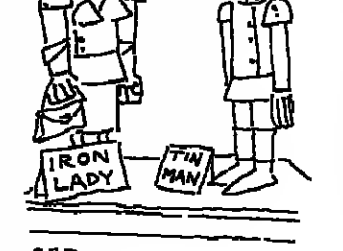
Major vowed proudly on taking office that individuals such as Reece would "not find me under their tutelage". But, haunted by his predecessor, he has been forced to bow to the inevitable.

Mrs Thatcher made no secret of the fact that image-makers were heeded in No. 10 during her reign. She would doubtless derive considerable satisfaction at the sight of Major eating his words. The rebuilding of Mrs Thatcher involved a new wardrobe, a softer voice and her remarkable hairstyle.

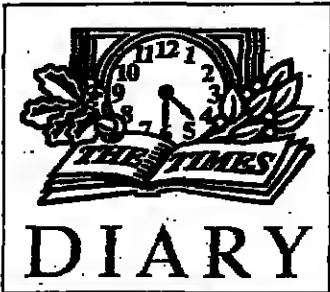
Although the changes in Major are not yet fully apparent, Reece has been quietly advising him for several months on how to improve his image with the voters. Surprisingly, he believes Major is still one of the Tories' few trump cards. Nor is Reece, knighted by Mrs

Thatcher for his work in 1986, the lone member of the *ancien régime* now back in favour at Downing Street. Sir Ronald Millar, who crafted some of the most memorable phrases in Mrs Thatcher's speeches, is also being consulted by the prime minister.

Millar, who wrote the fabled line "U turn if you want to, the lady is not for turning", says: "The general idea for the American press conferences is coming from Gordon Reece. There was a long break before I was asked if I would help the new regime. Now I find that John Major is as receptive to ideas as Margaret." Maybe he needs to be.



Geo



■ Few could have been more delighted than Brendan Foster, the long-distance Olympic medalist, over Edmond Martin's victory in the London marathon. As distributor of Brooks sportsware, the victor's make of running shoe, Foster's company Nova International was his sponsor. But although he was commenting for the BBC as Martin approached the line, Foster was professional to the last. His lugubrious commentary never once wavered with excitement.

Speak to me

COMMUNICATION problems are dogging not just the Tory party. In the Labour stronghold of Hackney, Diane Abbott, one of the local MPs, has resorted to pleading for an audience with one of her councillors in an article in *The Hackney Gazette*.

Under the headline "Still Waiting", Abbott likens Labour councillor Andy Buttress to the Scarlet Pimpernel. She is, she says, seeking him here, there and everywhere to talk about cuts in services. But like the Pimpernel, he is proving "damn elusive".

In response to the community groups steaming in to see me, I wrote to Cllr Buttress and asked for a meeting. I have written twice since then, still no reply... So please, Cllr Buttress, get in touch," she appeals. Buttress so far appears unmoved by her scribbles. Perhaps Abbott should try a US-style press conference — televised, just like the Conservatives.

Lost art

AMONG those saddest at the death of Dame Elisabeth Frink is Arts Council chairman Lord Palumbo, a great friend of the sculptor. He had commissioned Frink to do a bust of himself and one of his wife, Hayat. Last month he had his first sitting with Frink in her Dorset studio; today was to be his second.

Although ill, Frink was "full of beans", but she tired quickly, says Palumbo. "We had to cut the thing short. She started with the clay model of a head and in about 20 minutes it was taking take shape." Sadly, the bust got no further and Palumbo is unlikely to keep it.

Had the two busts been completed — Lady Palumbo's was not even started — Palumbo believes they would have been among Frink's more significant achievements. "You see, it was very unusual for her to attempt women. But she met my wife and agreed to do it immediately."

Go for red lights

AN EXTRAORDINARY appeal appears in the *London Review of Books*, one of the literary circle's more highbrow publications. Fiona Pitt-Kethley, a poet specialising in erotica, wants readers to send her details of any brothels, strip joints and dens of iniquity they have visited. She is looking for salacious details for a new book: *The Red Light Districts of the World*.

Having travelled Dublin, Cairo, Amsterdam, Tokyo, Tel Aviv, Toronto and Istanbul for research, Pitt-Kethley now has another 30 cities on her list. "I would be prepared to write up the more respectable side of any city while researching its under-belly after hours," she says.

■ Property may be bouncing back — but only against the odds. Planners at Westminster council say a £230m office development in front of Victoria station is too tall for permission to be granted. The de-

cision comes just months after the Royal Fine Art Commission rejected the proposal on the ground that the building wasn't tall enough.

Death note

YOU might have thought Sir Ernst Gombrich, would list *The Story of Art*, the world's all-time best selling art history book, as his most important achievement. Far from it. Gombrich, the eminent art historian, has just revealed his most significant deed.

"I am happy to have been the one to tell Winston Churchill and the whole world that Hitler was dead," he recalls in the book *A Lifelong Interest: Conversations on art and science with Didier Eribon*, published next month.

Gombrich, professor emeritus at the University of London, was working at the BBC at Reading, translating foreign broadcasts, when German radio declared an important announcement was imminent. He recognised a movement from a Bruckner symphony which had been written to mark the death of Wagner.

"They asked me to write the various possibilities on bits of paper. On one I wrote 'Hitler is dead'," he said. That little piece of paper went to Churchill; it was Gombrich's own contribution to history.

NEWS

Inferno ends Waco siege

A ball of flame last night engulfed the besieged cult compound at Waco, Texas, amid fears of a mass suicide prompted by an FBI bungling.

The 51-day siege of the Branch Davidian headquarters came to an apocalyptic climax after agents had tried to force its occupants out with tear gas and smashing down walls. The leader, David Koresh and 95 followers, including up to 26 Britons, are holed up in the compound. Pages 1, 14, 19

Violence mars Hani funeral as six die

At least six people died in the violence marking the funeral in Johannesburg yesterday of Chris Hani, the assassinated general secretary of the South African Communist Party. More than 100,000 mourners mostly peaceful but many carrying axes and pangas took part. Pages 1, 10, 19

Bosnia war twists

The Bosnian war took a sinister twist yesterday, with fighting between the republic's Muslims and Croat convulsing the centre of the republic and coinciding with Russian anxiety about the West's role. Pages 8, 11, 16

Maastricht move

The government faces the possibility of defeat later this week on the Maastricht bill after an unexpected decision yesterday that MPs will, after all, be allowed to vote on the social chapter. Page 8

Vote for change

President Scalfaro began searching for a new government to oversee electoral reform after Italians voted overwhelmingly to end proportional representation and half a century of corrupt politics. Page 9

Teachers balloted

The dispute over national curriculum tests intensified today as the main moderate teaching union started to ballot members on a boycott this summer. Page 2

By-election boost

Newbury Conservatives say that victory in the May 6 by-election would confirm public confidence in John Major's government and boost Britain's economic recovery into the bargain. Page 7

Special needs

Hospitals are undermining the will of teenagers with cancer to recover by failing to pay attention to their special needs, a cancer charity claimed. Page 5

Designers tailor broader bottoms

Underwear, aeroplanes, cars and skirts are being redesigned to cater for the burgeoning bottom and the longer leg. Not only have British Airways set up a task force to design seats for the taller and broader passenger, but high street shops and car companies are also measuring up to accommodate the growth in the average size of British bodies. Page 6

Council tax drops

Western Isles Council, which has set one of the highest council taxes in Britain, will announce a large reduction in bills. Page 7

Palestinians thrive

After 125 days in exile, Palestinians dumped by Israel in what was a snowy no man's land are thriving in this makeshift camp that, true to its name — Arabic for "field of flowers" — is alive with blossoms. Page 10

Leader fights back

Pakistan's sacked prime minister, Mian Nawaz Sharif, asked the High Court to block dissolution of the National Assembly and vowed to take his battle on to the streets. Page 14

Warsaw braced

Warsaw was under the tightest security since martial law to prevent demonstrations by right-wing skinheads or actions by terrorists from derailing the fiftieth anniversary commemorations of the Warsaw ghetto uprising. Page 9

Official poached

A second senior civil servant involved in preparing detailed plans for privatising prisons has been poached by the private sector to join a company bidding for the contract to run Strangeways jail in Manchester. Page 5

Jeeves retires

An exclusive London staffing agency, Jeeves Chauffeur Agency, catering to the rich and famous, has been wound-up. Page 6



Under fire: demonstrators carry a man injured after police opened fire near a stadium in Johannesburg yesterday. Pages 1, 10

BUSINESS

Coal warning: The government's promised subsidies for the coal industry will increase pressure to streamline, threatening further job losses, British Coal said. Page 25

Brighter outlook: High street sales are growing at their strongest rate since the end of 1991, according to new figures today from the Confederation of British Industry. Page 27

Markets: The pound rose sharply against the dollar, closing up 1.40 cents at \$1.5400, but eased against the German mark to close at DM2.4628, down 28 pfennigs. The FT-SE 100 share index opened strongly but yielded earlier gains to end up just 5.6 at 2,830.0. Page 28

SPORT

Cricket: Ian Botham said that this season, his twentieth, will probably be his last in first-class cricket, although he admitted that he would like to play one last time in an international against the Australians. Page 48

Motor sport: Nigel Mansell took his tally of championship points in the IndyCar series to 15 after finishing third in Long Beach, California, on Sunday. Page 44

Snooker: Alan McManus showed his unflappable temperament to overcome 17-year-old Ronnie O'Sullivan in the first round of the Embassy world snooker championship at the Crucible Theatre in Sheffield. Page 48

FEATURES

Whither Bosnia: After the fall of Srebrenica and Barossa Thatcher's condemnation of Europe's failure to act against the Serbs, *The Times* has asked some of those who have expressed views in the past whether their opinions have changed. Page 16

BODY AND MIND

Early signs: An experimental screening for ovarian cancer is being conducted at King's College Hospital, London. Page 17

Doctor, doctor: The balance of power in the doctor-patient relationship has shifted, James Le Fanu on why doctors hate their patients. Page 17

ARTS

Rameau in the Bull Ring: City of Birmingham Touring Opera has taken over a derelict ballroom in Birmingham's most infamous shopping centre, to stage a French Baroque opera. Page 41

Chamber music: Matthew Parris tunes in to a Radio 4 survey of 15 years' broadcasting from the House of Commons, but is sorry to find no room has been made for the wit and wisdom of the backbenchers. Page 41

Provincial life: Bill Morrison's trilogy, *A Love Song for Ulysses*, is an ambitious attempt to cover 70 years of Northern Ireland's troubles in six hours, recalling a blend of Maugham and *The Archers*. Page 42

PEOPLE IN THE TIMES



A quarter of a century on Enoch Powell's infamous "rivers of blood" speech on immigration is still capable of generating emotion. Page 2



Margaret Beckett, deputy Labour leader is threatening to disrupt tonight's meeting of the Plant commission on electoral reform. Page 8



Tony Pinchin, a Church of England clergyman, believes he can take most of his congregation with him when he joins the Catholic Church. Page 3

THE TIMES TOMORROW

Stage fit for a Bard

Will Sam Wanamaker's replica Globe Theatre, on the banks of the Thames, be ready for its scheduled opening next spring?

Street of Shame out of touch

Efforts continue to be made to report fairly on what happens beyond Watford, but is Fleet Street out of touch with the provinces? Walter Ellis reports

What price disobedience?

What is the traditional Russian price for disobedience to the ruler, be he tsar, communist or would-be democrat? Anne McElvoy explores the use of cars as a political weapon

TV LISTINGS

The tense negotiations between a Belgian policeman and a gunman holding a woman and children hostage are charted in 40 Minutes (BBC2, 9.50pm) Page 47

OPINION

The new governance

"Reinventing government" may not sound like a slogan to win the nation's heart and votes. But it is more likely to be the next decade's political "big idea" than zero inflation or European union. John Major... has understood that the relationship between citizens and public institutions is what all politics is about. Page 19

Tragedy in Waco

Inevitably Washington's critics will compare yesterday's fiasco with President Carter's attempt to rescue the American hostages from Iran... It would be regrettable if a series of mistakes in Waco were to shake the international confidence of a new administration that sets competence as one of its watchwords. Page 19

South African myths

President de Klerk must give hope to his ANC counterparts that South Africa is a test ground for a new politics. Page 19

COLUMNS

JENOCH POWELL

What happened in the 1950s and the 1960s was due overwhelmingly to that piece of self-inflicted national humbug, the British Nationality Act 1948. The act secured that, as new independent states were carved out of the old colonial and Indian empires, their inhabitants would have the same right to enter and reside in the UK as its native inhabitants. Page 18

BERNARD LEVIN

The tale of the European Bank would be bad enough if it were a matter of thieving. But no: it is quite clear that not so much as a bent coin has gone into any unauthorised pocket, that none of them can have any fear from even the most searching audit. Page 18

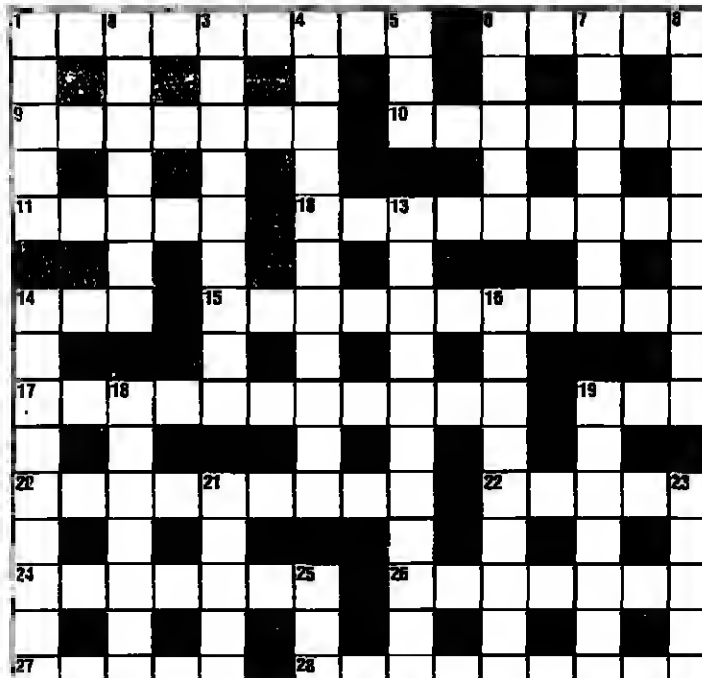
LETTERS

New legal aid regulations come under scrutiny. Page 19

THE PAPERS

Government has been all too good at spending dollars but not care for the destruction that has blighted LA streets is possible in the absence of commitment of the people. — *The Washington Times*

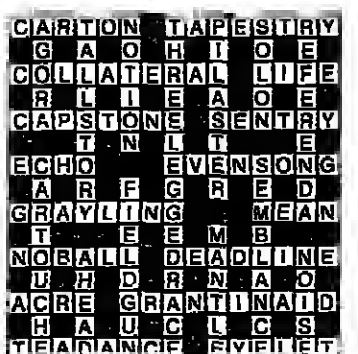
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 19,209



ACROSS

- 1 Bloom, say, beginning to carouse in the back bar (9).
- 5 Take return by public transport (5).
- 6 Boy given vessel — one of those used in the kitchen (7).
- 10 Dug that's apt to go to earth (7).
- 11 Excuse for a discharge of fire (5).
- 12 Woman in business — a northern trawler operator (9).
- 14 Distinctive quality of a gaseous substance (5).
- 15 Officer gives new order to alarm raider (4,7).
- 17 Trickery put university student with terrible grade inside? Heaven's (1,1).
- 19 Part of a prelude arranged for organ (3).
- 20 One who saves meat for feeding animals (9).
- 22 Stand-in officer backed with hesitation (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 19,208



DOWN

- 2 Temporary Head of English enters, looking smart (7).
- 26 Grace breaks into wages, perhaps, to obtain trinkets (7).
- 27 Lou's expressions of defiance and surprise, say (5).
- 28 Sailor caught in senseless action in the southern region (9).
- 1 Crazy to keep hot water in these containers? (5).
- 2 This is the gymnast's pigeon! (7).
- 3 Taken to be unusual demeanour (9).
- 4 Husband displayed fury after bluff in dramatic situation (5-6).
- 5 Soft drink in the theatre (5).
- 6 A little 23, say, capsizing a boat (5).
- 7 Sterner fairy tale writer — one of two presented to king (7).
- 8 Killer crossing line is a foreigner (9).
- 13 Nervous feeling when on coach with freakish person (5,6).
- 14 Application from a besuited male youth leader (9).
- 16 The boat for a month on a river? (9).
- 18 Remove security for a French politician at church (7).
- 19 Charm opponents with song (7).
- 21 Sign right in centre of Spanish port (5).
- 23 Summarize one hundred notes (5).
- 25 Flightless bird making endlessly plaintive sound (3).

Concise Crossword, page 48

TIMES WEATHERCALL

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0991 500 followed by the appropriate code.

Greater London	701
North-Surrey	702
Greater London & Kent	703
Devon & Cornwall	704
Wales, Shropshire, Hereford, Somerset	705
Berks, Bucks, Oxon	706
Bedford, Herts & Essex	707
Northants, Suffolk, Cambs	708
West Mid & Shropshire & Gwent	709
Shropshire, Hereford & Worcester	710
Central Midlands	711
East Midlands	712
Lincoln & Humberside	713
Dyfed & Pembro	714
Gwynedd & Chwyd	715
N.W. England	716
W & S Yorks & Darl	717
N.E. England	718
Cumbria & Lake District	719
S.W. Scotland	720
E. Scotland	721
Edinburgh & Borders	722
E. Central Scotland	723
Argyll & Bute	724
Argyll & Bute	725
Argyll & Bute	726
Argyll & Bute	727
Argyll & Bute	728
Argyll & Bute	729
Argyll & Bute	730

Weathercall is charged at 38p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.

AA ROADWATCH

For the latest AA traffic and roadworks information, 24 hours a day, dial 0336 401 followed by the appropriate code.

London & SE traffic, roadworks	
C. London (within N & S Cross)	731
M-ways/roads M4-M1	732
M-ways/roads M1-Dartford T	733
M-ways/roads Dartford T-M25	734
M-ways/roads M25-M4	735
M25 London Orbital only	736
National traffic and roadworks	
National motorways	737
West Country	738
Wales	739
Midlands	740
East Anglia	741
North-west England	742
North-east England	743
Scotland	744
Northern Ireland	745

AA Roadwatch is charged at 38p per minute (cheap rate) and 48p per minute at all other times.

WEATHER

Shetland, southern and eastern Scotland, and the Lake District will be wet, but it will clear during the evening. Western and northern Scotland and Northern Ireland will have some rain. Wales and southwest England will be mainly cloudy with outbreaks of rain. The rest of England will be dry, although rain will spread to central and eastern areas in the evening. Outlook: some sunshine, but showers as well.

ABROAD

MOONDAY: 1=cloudy, 2=drizzle, 3=light rain, 4=rain, 5=heavy rain, 6=thunder, 7=strong wind, 8=strong rain, 9=strong sun, 10=strong sun, 11=strong sun, 12=strong sun						
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Algeria	17	63	5	1	1	1

Notes: figures are latest available

LONDON

Yesterday: Temp: max 6am to 6pm, 15C (59F); min 6pm to 6am, 11C (52F). Humidity: 65%. Wind: 5-10 mph. Rain: 24hr to 6pm, nil. Sun: 24hr to 6pm, 1hr. Bar: mean sea level, 6pm, 1017 mbars. Rain: 24hr to 6pm, nil.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Sunday: Highest day temp London, 17C (63F), lowest day temp Tynemouth, Tyne and Wear, 6C (43F), highest rainfall Spaldwick, Cambs, 1.05in, highest sunshine Kinross, Grampian, 9.7hr.

MANCHESTER

Yesterday: Temp: max 6am to 6pm, 14C (57F); min 6pm to 6am, 9C (48F). Rain: 24hr to 6pm, 0.1in. Sun: 24hr to 6pm, 0.2hr.

GLASGOW

Yesterday: Temp: max 6am to 6pm, 13C (55F); min 6pm to 6am, 5C (41F). Rain: 24hr to 6pm, 0.45in. Sun: 24hr to 6pm, nil.

AROUND BRITAIN

Sun	Rain	Max	C	F
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52
Abertawe	0.2	0.36	11	52

LIGHTING-UP TIMES

London	8.36 pm to 5.25 am
Bristol	8.45 pm to 5.34 am
Edinburgh	9.00 pm to 5.25 am
Manchester	8.49 pm to 5.28 am
Penzance	8.54 pm to 5.49 am

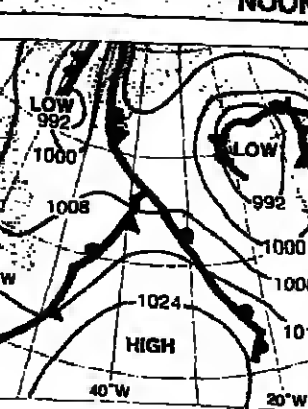
YESTERDAY

London	8.36 pm to 5.25 am		
Bristol	8.45 pm to 5.34 am		
Edinburgh	9.00 pm to 5.25 am		
Manchester	8.49 pm to 5.28 am		
Cardiff	8.54 pm to 5.49 am		
	Sun rises:	Sun sets:	
	5.55 am	8.06 pm	
	Moon rises	Moon sets:	
	4.56 am	6.54 pm	
Moon tomorrow			
and Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1969: The			

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT	TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8	London Bridge	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8
Abertawe	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8	Abertawe	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8
Abertawe	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8	Abertawe	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8
Abertawe	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8	Abertawe	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8
Abertawe	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8	Abertawe	1.46	6.6	2.12	6.8

NOON TODAY



Information supplied by Met Office

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Lamont hails UK's top billing in EC recovery



Lamont: no UK rate cuts

FROM TOM WALKER
IN LUXEMBOURG

NORMAN Lamont, the Chancellor, told his EC colleagues yesterday that Britain was leading Europe out of recession and only slow growth in their economies was hindering the British recovery. The Chancellor urged his EC partners to lower their interest rates, but said no further cuts were needed in Britain. "I regard the present level of interest rates as compatible with recovery. I regard the strength of the pound in recent weeks as a good development and one which will reinforce counter-inflationary pressures."

He brushed aside criticism that sterling's devaluation had produced alarming signs that inflation was

about to spiral again. "We always expected to see some rise and it's come much later than many people predicted," he said. He urged companies to control their costs. "That is the only way for them to win increased market share." He also stuck by his forecast for 1.5 per cent growth in gross domestic product this year.

In a meeting supposedly dedicated to the EC "growth package", Mr Lamont, turning the community into an "us and them" playing field, with Britain apart, said: "The prospects for Britain are very encouraging, even though the outlook for much of the rest of Europe remains of concern." He said Britain had been the first into recession and was now the first out. He reminded them that the last time this

happened, in the Thatcher years, Britain saw eight years of a growth that averaged more than three per cent a year.

The self-congratulatory tone of the Chancellor irked Henning Christophersen, the EC's finance commissioner who has predicted that overall EC growth next year will be 1.8 per cent. "The UK has had the strongest recession of all member states," he said. "There is nothing astonishing that the UK is now beginning to regain potential after several years of negative growth. Indeed, it would have been catastrophic if there were no signs."

The ministers made some progress on an EC growth package now valued at about £27 billion, although its

financing remains at best vague. Member states are supposed to contribute about £9.6 billion to this total. Mr Lamont presented his colleagues with details of the Channel tunnel, Heathrow-London and Crossrail railway links, all of which had been included in his Autumn Statement. So far, the EC, through the European Investment Bank, has given just over £1 billion to 21 infrastructure projects.

But the overall package falls well short of the £50 billion originally envisaged by Mr Christophersen, and Mr Lamont had other priorities in mind for the EC. "It is overshadowed by the gigantic issue of the GATT," he said. "A resolution of the GATT is the surest way of restoring economic confidence in Europe."

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Haden pays £359,000 to former executives

PHILIP Ling and Mel Hawley, the former chairman and chief executive of Haden Maclellan, shared a £359,000 compensation payment, according to the company's accounts. Mr Hawley, who left in February 1992 after a year as chief executive, is also shown as receiving £209,000 as the highest paid director during the year to end-December 1992. Mr Ling, who left the company in September 1992, is shown as receiving £46,000 for his services as chairman until his departure. In 1992, Haden reported pre-tax profits of £4.3 million under the FR33 accounting standard and cut the total dividend from 8p a share to 2p.

Greenacre improves

GREENACRE Group, the operator of private nursing homes, says it expects another strong performance this year and that it is well placed financially to continue with expansion plans. The company reported a rise in pre-tax profits from £913,160 to £1.36 million for the year to the end-January, with earnings of 0.57p a share, up from 0.47p. The final dividend is 0.15p a share (0.125p), making 0.28p a share (0.25p). Turnover rose from £3.03 million to £4.8 million.

Ivory & Sime offer

IVORY & Sime, the Scottish fund manager, is launching two investment schemes aimed at a wide range of investors who will earn a return from monthly share sales. The Income and Savings Investment Schemes, which will start early next month, take advantage of the annual capital gains tax allowance of £5,800 and the sale of shares will be free of charges. There is a monthly income plan and a monthly savings plan. Ivory & Sime hopes to attract £100 million in funds.

Dragon shows fire

STRONG performances by Pacific stock markets helped to lift EFM Dragon Trust's net asset value by 62 per cent, to 19.32p per share, in the six months to February 28. Dragon has a quarter of its assets in Thailand, where the Thai stock market index rose by 25.6 per cent in the period. It also has large exposure to Hong Kong. Revenue from investments grew from £430,000 to £697,000 but there is no dividend, in line with Dragon's aim of long-term capital growth.

Asda Property advances

ASDA Property Holdings is a changed company after the disposal of most of its tenanted residential portfolio for £36 million last year. Total sales in the year to December 31 were £70 million. Its investment portfolio saw a 12.5 per cent fall over the 12 months to £130 million, of which only £14 million is residential. Pre-tax profits increased from £4.4 million to £6 million. Earnings per share from 5.5p rose to 8.1p and the dividend is up 5 per cent to 2.1p per share, with a 1.45p final.

C&W in Asian venture

CABLE and Wireless, the international telecommunications group, and Hong Kong Telecom, its 58.4 per cent-owned subsidiary, are planning a joint venture company to invest in business opportunities in Asia including China. The new company will be owned 51 per cent by Cable and Wireless, which controls Mercury, British Telecom's rival, in the UK, and 49 per cent by Hong Kong Telecom, in which the government of China has a 20 per cent stake.

THE TIMES

Crossword range

(See also under today's Concise Crossword)
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Brittan seeks compromise in trade talks with Kantor

FROM WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU IN WASHINGTON

SIR LEON Brittan, the EC trade commissioner, arrived in Washington for a crucial and possibly final round of talks to avert a US public procurement clampdown, which could develop into the most serious transatlantic trade conflict in years.

As part of his two-day visit, Sir Leon will try to persuade his US counterpart, Mickey Kantor, the US trade representative, to accept a compromise solution, under which both trading blocks would improve market access to public procurement bids.

The talks follow a threat by the US administration to ban European telecommunications equipment and power engineering firms from US federal procurement contracts, because of a new EC single market rule that grants European manufacturers a 3 per cent bidding advantage. Meanwhile, the EC retorts that the Buy-America Act would act in a similarly discriminating way in the US.

Officials close to the talks were yesterday trying to play down expectations, after little progress was reached in preliminary negotiations. Sir Leon's discussions with Mr Kantor focused initially on the procurement issue, but the subject was then delegated to the level of officials. In the afternoon, Sir Leon was due to meet Warren Christopher, the secretary of state, for talks focusing on Russia.

A failure of the procurement talks would lead to the first

EC-US trade conflict under the new administration, and may be seen as evidence that the administration stands by its sometimes tough rhetoric on trade. President Clinton has given conflicting signals at times, but Congress' overwhelming tendency towards protectionism gives the administration little leeway in its policies.

The issue of fairness in procurement markets is intractable because of the fundamentally different structure of the two markets in the US and the EC. The US charges that EC companies bid for twice as many contracts in the US, than American companies do in Europe. European officials, however, doubt the validity of these figures, and the issue is complicated further by the differing ownership patterns: utilities are principally a public-sector industry in Europe, and a private sector industry in the US.

Sir Leon is prepared to yield on the principal US demand - to waive article 29 of the EC utilities directive, which lays out the bidding discrimination - but he also attaches similar conditions in respect of US trade discrimination. Under article 29, a US company would need to offer a price of at least 3 per cent less than an EC competitor in order to win the contract, but EC rules allow a waiver under certain circumstances. The Buy-America Act gives American companies a 6 per cent price advantage.



Together - yet apart: Sir Leon Brittan (left) and Mickey Kantor have made little progress in talks so far

Marks plans to sparkle in Europe

BY SUSAN GULCHRIST

MARKS and Spencer is set to expand in continental Europe. It plans to double the number of stores there in the next few years.

Expansion strategy includes new franchises, as well as opening M&S outlets. Last week, the group launched its 71st franchise store in Vienna. A 30,000 sq ft outlet is due to open in Barcelona this autumn as part of a joint venture with Cortefiel: the partnership already runs two stores in Madrid and Seville. This will bring the total number of non-franchise outlets on the Continent to 20. M&S is committed to doubling that figure as soon as it finds appropriate sites. The company was reluctant to

disclose a timetable, but a source said: "Europe is our strategic priority, so we are looking keenly." However, it took nearly two years to find the Barcelona site in the Lilla shopping centre.

M&S intends to rely on organic growth this time, after being badly burnt after its £420 million acquisition in 1988 of the Brooks Brothers menswear chain in America.

The initial move into Europe, with the opening of a Paris store in the mid-seventies, was in response to fears that the UK market was becoming saturated. However, the expansion of the group's product range into sectors such as home furnis-

ings has provided new avenues of growth.

Dependency on the UK market, which accounts for about 85 per cent of sales and has left the group exposed to recession, has been identified as a weakness. Nevertheless, four new British stores are planned in the next two years, including outlets in Edinburgh, Dorling, Surrey, and in Torbay, Devon.

The decision whether to own or franchise a store depends on its size. Outlets larger than 30,000 sq ft, which can house a broad product range, are invariably managed by M&S itself. Smaller franchises usually stock just lingerie and toilet-

tries, while the bigger ones will also sell clothes. However, there are some bizarre product mixes. A franchise store in Lisbon stocks lingerie and home furnishings.

While acknowledging that there is no standard Euro-consumer, M&S is confident that there is a market for its products abroad. Ironically, its Paris store sells more English muffins in the summer months than all its British counterparts.

Expansion is not without its hazards. The absence of changing rooms in the Paris store resulted in shoppers disrobing in public to try on clothes. Fitting rooms have been installed.

Lloyd's pressed over writs

BY SARAH BAGNALL, INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

THE Corporation of Lloyd's is coming under increasing pressure to extend its standstill on legal action against names on the Gooda Walker syndicates.

The call from the Society of Names follows last week's news that profits of several syndicates had been enhanced "significantly" through the use of specialist reinsurance policies. The findings prompted Ken Randall, author of the report and former head of regulation at Lloyd's, to hand the report to the Serious Fraud Office.

According to the SFO, no decision has been reached on

whether to investigate the syndicates' affairs. However, Tom Bonyon, a director at the Society, has written to Peter Middleton, the corporation's chief executive, asking for an extension of the moratorium, which expires at the end of the month, until any SFO investigation has been completed. He said that calling on names for funds would not be fair, given the uncertainty surrounding the syndicates' profits.

The plea from the society follows a similar request from Val Powell, chief executive of the Association of Lloyd's

Members, to Brian Garraway, chairman of the Lloyd's regulatory board.

The Lloyd's writs are against an estimated 3,500 names who have refused to settle insurance losses, which for the market as a whole totalled £2.06 billion last year. Names on the Gooda Walker syndicates are some of the worst hit in the market, with losses totalling £925 million. More than 2,000 Gooda Walker names are suing 67 Lloyd's agencies in an attempt to recover £396 million of losses resulting from the excess-of-loss spiral.

Leyland DAF pay cuts agreed

BY PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

LEYLAND DAF employees yesterday agreed to pay cuts of up to 8 per cent to help the management buy-out of the company.

Although union officials insisted that the move was an interim measure, the wage cut - particularly one of such a scale - offers a rare example in the UK of employees directly trading off pay against jobs.

The cut will affect the earnings of all the 1,000 employees at Leyland DAF's van plant in Birmingham. Most will have their wages cut by 5 per cent, or about £12.50 a week, from their average pay

of £250. Some staff will also lose a 3 per cent rise awarded before Leyland DAF went into receivership. Directors could lose up to £3,000 a year.

Managers are expected later this week to reach a final agreement with the receivers to clinch the buy-out of the factory, which has lost 800 jobs since the collapse of its Dutch-owned parent company.

Leyland DAF said the money gained would be reinvested in the future of the company. John Allen, Midlands executive councillor of the AEEU, the engineering union, said that the move was

principally to help the buy-out team. "We will be back as soon as the company is showing signs of profitability to seek a restoration of salaries."

The company said that to try to be fair to everyone, the new pay arrangements would include an element of profit-related pay.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, will confirm today that the number of UK employees covered by the government's profit-related pay taxation arrangements now exceeds 1 million. The breaking of the 1 million threshold, was disclosed in The Times.

Eighties raider fights for survival



Tables turned: Pickens faces a three-fold threat

T. BOONE Pickens, the Texas corporate raider who struck fear into the hearts of oilmen with so-called greenmail raids in the eighties, is fighting for his corporate life.

With his John Wayne drawl, he preached shareholder value but says now that it may be several years before he can pay interest on the corporate debts of Mesa, his master company.

Standard & Poor's has \$600-million-worth of Mesa bonds under credit review in case Mr Pickens fails to pay interest of \$29.3 million due on May 1.

It already rates the debts as junk bonds, with a triple C minus ranking. Failure to make the next interest payment will push them down to D, the lowest S&P has available and viewed as the last stop before bankruptcy protection.

Mr Pickens has been in talks with bondholders for the past six weeks. He wants them to swap their debts for a

zero-rated coupon which would not pay interest for almost four years.

The holders are led by the formidable Wilbur Ross, of Rothschild, who has a reputation for wringing the best deals from overstretched companies. He says progress has been made and talks continue this week.

But there are just a third of Mr Pickens' problems. Unocal, an oil company based in Los Angeles, is suing him for insider dealing in a technical case that could cost Mesa \$150 million in damages. Unocal alleges that Mr Pickens's profits from his abortive 1985 attempt to take over Unocal was made with inside information. The case

begins in June. Meanwhile, the value of Mr Pickens's treasured natural gas assets is likely to remain depressed. When he formed Mesa in 1985, the gas price was \$2.68 per thousand cubic feet, but is unlikely to top \$1.80 in the near future.

Mr Pickens was among the first of the eighties raiders to use junk bonds. In a 1983 run at Gulf Oil, the company was eventually rescued by Chevron for \$13 billion, the largest US corporate takeover on record at the time.

Mr Pickens went on to hit and run at Unocal, Phillips and Diamond Shamrock, but the pickings became less and less. He made \$214 million profit on the sale of Gulf shares, but just \$3 million on Shamrock.

Now, Mesa has debts of \$1.2 billion, and analysts say that even if it strikes a deal with the bondholders, it is likely to breach its banking covenants in the second half of this year.

High street sales rise strongest since end of 1991

BY PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

HIGH street sales are growing faster than at any time since the end of 1991, according to figures from the Confederation of British Industry.

Ministers are likely to use the findings of the latest CBI distributive trades survey as further evidence to support claims that the recession is ending and economic recovery is under way.

Some CBI leaders continued to stress the need for caution in interpreting figures, but economic analysts expect signs of greater confidence to be reflected in a string of quarterly business surveys to be released over the next week by the British Chambers of Commerce, the Institute of Directors and the CBI itself, in its industrial trends report.

The CBI said that distributive sales — retailing, wholesaling and the motor trade — increased "significantly" year-on-year, in March. Of 15,000 retail outlets surveyed, those saying their sales were up exceeded those reporting a fall by 33 percentage points.

That compares with a negative balance of one percentage point in February. Distributors forecast continued year-on-year sales growth in April. Nigel Whitaker, chairman

Prospects on the high street are brighter but builders remain subdued and the outlook for unemployment in London and the South East is grim

of the CBI's distributive trades panel, said: "The upturn seems to be starting to gather pace." He pointed out, though, that the improvement was not yet firmly established.

Wholesalers saw the strongest increase. Of those surveyed, a positive balance of 41 percentage points reported a rise. But retailing saw its third monthly increase, which the CBI described as a "sustained improvement in sales", leaving volumes only a little under average for the time of year.

Small retailers, however, saw a decline: growth was limited to large stores and mail order companies.

The motor sector reported another strong increase, with the sharpest rise — a positive balance of 85 percentage points — occurring in parts and accessories.

Building materials producers confirmed the emerging signs of recovery, though the National Council of Building Materials Producers said they offered "only partial relief" to the recession-hit construction industry. The council still fore-

casts a fall of 2.5 per cent in construction output this year, but expects a slight recovery, of 1.5 per cent, in 1994, and a stronger rise in 1995.

National Westminster Bank gave a warning that unemployment in London and the South East would rise by 124,000, or 13 per cent, over the next year, in spite of a slow, though accelerating, recovery in the region.

David Kern, NatWest's chief economist, said the upturn would arrive later in London and the South East and be more subdued. While evidence of recovery was strengthening, unemployment would continue to rise ahead of the national average.

Poll figures by Gallup for the European Commission showed that people remained cautious about any recovery. Only a fifth of those polled thought the financial position of their households would improve over the next 12 months. 30 per cent thought it would become worse.

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Tougher bread line: Garry Weston, ABF chairman, who is determined to compete with bakers offering cheaper own-label bread to supermarkets

ABF wins smaller slice of the action

BY OUR CITY EDITOR

SHARES in Associated British Foods, Britain's largest baker, fell 16p to 479p after it said its bread making suffered from "severe price competition" in an industry with excess capacity.

Analysts believe that ABF has merely broken even on bread in the first half of its current year.

Garry Weston, the chairman, said that taking profits had fallen by £9 million or £10 million in the 24 weeks ending February 27, limiting the rise in pre-tax profits from £150 million to £161 million, based on the FRS3 accounting standard.

Stripping out last year's £11 million loss on the 21 per cent stake in Berisford International, ABF profits stood still and at the operating level fell from £145 million to £131 million on sales up 8 per cent to £2,044 million. ABF noted that its stake in Berisford rose in value by £15 million during the half year, but added that it would not reflect any change in the value of the holding until the full year.

ABF was helped by Black Wednesday, which fell at the start of the accounting period. The drop in interest rates boosted the value of ABF's gilt holdings, raising investment income on its £282 million cash pile from £35 million to £45 million.

The devaluation of the green pound helped profits at British Sugar rise by 10 per cent to £75 million. Analysts also attributed British Sugar's performance to a good crop and gains in productivity.

But ABF shops in the Irish Republic suffered intense competition, with profits falling from £23 million to £13 million on sales of £593 million, up 17 per cent. The first interim dividend has been held at 8.5p a share out of earnings up from 21.2p to 23.9p thanks to a fall in the tax charge.

Mr Weston said he would continue to tackle the problems in the bread market by competing with the independent bakers that have been offering cheaper own-label bread to the supermarkets. He expected that ABF as a whole would show some growth on the year.

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Hopes of German rate cut grow after French easing

BY COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

THE French central bank, confident that the worst of the market assaults on the franc are behind it, lowered interest rates for the second time in a week, raising hopes that the Bundesbank will ease again at its council meeting on Thursday.

The new centre-right government of Edouard Balladur, the prime minister — who is today expected to reveal plans for making the Banque de France independent of the state — appears to have won market confidence that France will persist with its policy of keeping the franc firmly within the exchange-rate mechanism, despite its aim of spurring the economy.

The French economy contracted by 0.5 per cent in the final quarter of last year. The shrinkage is believed to have continued in the first three months of this year, as France kept up its interest-rate guard in defence of the franc.

The Banque de France yesterday cut its intervention rate, the floor for interbank rates, from 9.10 per cent to 8.75 per cent. This was the first cut in this rate for five months. The 5 to 10-day repurchase rate, which sets the upper limit of short-term rates was also lowered from 10 per cent to 9.75 per cent.

Only a week ago, the bank

cut two percentage points of this rate.

Despite his desire to restore growth in the French economy, analysts believe M. Balladur will probably have to wait for more cuts from the Bundesbank before further French easing is possible.

Avinash Persaud, currency analyst at UBS, said interest rate cuts within the ERM have become "self-reinforcing". But he said the French worries will only subside after the Danish referendum on May 18.

The latest rate cut failed to dent the franc, which closed in Paris at DM3.3778, almost unchanged from its opening

level. The franc advanced to its strongest since December after the rate cut, despite the narrowing interest rate gap with Germany.

The Norwegian central bank also announced further rate cuts, paring a quarter point off its key overnight lending rate to 8.25 per cent. Central banks in Belgium and The Netherlands are expected to reduce their rates again this week.

The pound slipped back slightly against the mark, but gained against the retreating dollar. On its trade-weighted index, sterling closed at 80.1, up 0.1 from Friday.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, yesterday commented that the present level of British interest rates was "compatible with economic recovery", suggesting that he is keen to consolidate the recent appreciation of sterling.

Piero Barucci, the Italian treasury minister, yesterday predicted the lira would not return to the ERM until June at the earliest.

The dollar plunged new depths against the yen, falling to a low of ¥110.70 in Far Eastern trading hours, after weekend talks between the American and Japanese leaders that underlined the gulf between Tokyo and Washington on trade policy.

Balladur waiting for Bonn

Only a week ago, the bank

Ibstock cuts payout after £27m loss

BY CARL MORTSHED

IBSTOCK Johnson, the bricks and paper pulp manufacturer, plunged into the red last year after a £28 million exceptional loss. The company has announced a cut in dividend to 1p from 6p in 1991.

The pre-tax loss of £27.5 million, compared with £10.5 million profit last time, and the cut in the payout were forecast in February.

The company has reduced fixed costs by pushing production through bigger plant at a time when demand is low and prices are under pressure.

Ibstock, which has about 9 per cent of the UK brick market, sold about 260 million bricks in the UK last year, down 30 million, while American production remained static at £400 million.

Margin pressure sent trading profit from bricks diving from £11.5 million to £3.2 million with American operations making a loss of £1.6 million for the year.

Ian Macellan, managing director, said the objective was to raise brick prices. He noted that demand was picking up, with volumes up more than 10 per cent in the UK during the first few months of the year and reported some signs that prices were hardening for soft brick.

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Chrysler hit by health care costs

Special costs for employee health care plunged Chrysler almost \$4.2 billion into the red in the first three months of this year. But the third largest US car maker, which had been pulling out of the recession much faster than General Motors and Ford, said without the charge, pre-tax operating profit was an \$80 million quarterly record against a \$13 million loss in the same period last year.

Robert Eaton, Chrysler chairman, said: "On an operating basis, this is our fourth consecutive profitable quarter." World-wide sales jumped 33 per cent to \$10.9 billion and in Europe, where recession has hit several countries, Chrysler exported 13,786 vehicles, up 29.4 per cent.

Barclays buys in

BARCLAYS plans to buy the shares in Barclays Bank SA, its Spanish subsidiary, it does not already own, via a public offer which values the 8.78 per cent holding at £23 million. Barclays will offer £23.25 (£4.63) per share cash. Barclays said the largest minority shareholder will accept for his 4.06 per cent stake.

Bid talks end

Hélène, the clothing distributor, welcomed the departure of rival bidder Apex Partners for Gabicci, the casualwear company. Apex confirmed talks with Gabicci had ended. Hélène, offering shares worth £5.5 million, welcomed the removal of possible uncertainty surrounding its bid.

United ahead

Lord Stevens, chairman of United Newspapers, received an 18.1 per cent pay rise last year, says the annual report. His pay totalled £400,840, including a performance bonus of £41,125, against £339,425 in 1991. Pre-tax profits rose 125.2 per cent last year to £109.9 million (£48.8 million).

Clarks, which has 4,100 private shareholders, who are divided over the group's future, last saw its shares traded at 90p. A band of disident Clarks shareholders, claiming to speak for more than half the eligible votes, said last night they would "fight this one all the way". One of them, Michael Markham, said the plan "drives a coach and horses through Clarks' articles of

Exchange looking at Topic handover

BY GEORGE SIVELL, CITY EDITOR

THE handing over of the running of the London Stock Exchange's Topic share price and news information network to an outside company is expected to be discussed at a board meeting on Thursday.

Stock exchange directors are understood to want to keep the collection of company news and the share price dealing information but believe that Topic cannot compete with the large information services companies.

A decision to contract out the networking of Topic services would come soon after the decision to scrap Taurus, the share settlement system, after it failed in early tests, leading to the resignation of Peter Rawlings, the stock exchange's chief executive.

Topic has had problems as well. On the first day of electronic share dealing in autumn 1986, nicknamed Big Bang, the system failed, leaving brokers to deal with

each other by telephone. Reuters later stepped up competition on share price and company news information after the rules on competition were amended under pressure from the Office of Fair Trading.

It is understood that the exchange would save the substantial costs of running the Topic system but would lose some revenue from providing the screens to dealers and brokers. However, the decision to scrap Taurus means the exchange no longer needs such large revenues.

A Bank of England working party is still looking at how to modernise the existing Taurus system. The working party's report is due at the end of June, and the exchange will wait until then before taking a decision. Licensing a system, like the one operated by the Nasdaq market in America, seems possible.

Former Eagle Trust chief gets six years

Continued from page 25 from 1987 into a mini-conglomerate dealing in camera hire and engineering. Along the way, Ferriday bought Paramount Airways, which he trumpeted as Britain's first non-smoking airline.

But behind the outward success story, Ferriday had set in train the business deal that was to bring him down. Eagle Trust made a cash-or-shares takeover bid for Samuelson, a film and lighting equipment company, in autumn 1987.

Black Monday saw Eagle shares fall and Samuelson shareholders took the cash option, leaving Ferriday with a massive underwriting commitment. To meet it, he stole from Eagle and routed the cash through Connect Parcels, a delivery company, and two off-shore companies.

In May 1989, Eagle Trust, with 32,000 investors, became insolvent and trading in the company was suspended. Ferriday fled to America in August that year but ten months later gave himself up to detectives at Manchester Airport. He never gave evidence at his trial but, when asked about the possibility of jail, said: "If you can't take the heat, stay out of the kitchen."

The Serious Fraud Office said yesterday it was still considering three other men who originally stood trial alongside Ferriday but were removed from trial without being acquitted, on the direction of the judge. They are Richard Smith, 40, a former managing director of Eagle Trust; Martin Baker, 37, previously Eagle's finance director; and Leslie Goodwin, 42, a former chairman of Connect Parcels.

To pay for the acquisition, Berisford will make a rights issue. The company's shares, which were last traded at 128p, remain suspended until after May 7.

Alan Bowkett, Berisford's chief executive, whose team has in the past two years brought the group back from the financial brink, said there were no other bidders for Clarks. Other parties that were once interested, including FII, another shoe company, and Electra, the venture capital group, backed away.

Mr Bowkett said Berisford wanted Clarks because of its

worldwide brand names, its world markets and extensive manufacturing operations, and its potential for profits recovery.

Clarks' turnover, £636 million in 1989, was down to £614.6 million in the year to January 31. Pre-tax profit over the same period fell from £28.3 million to £1.7 million.

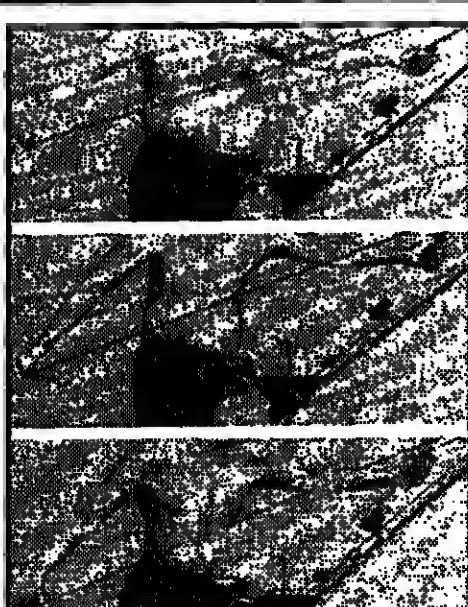
Clarks shareholders last year sanctioned the setting-up of a "bid committee" that sought to resolve differences. Berisford's proposals are judged the "most attractive put forward", Clarks said.

Clarks' 11 directors have all said the proposed Berisford terms are "fair and reasonable", seven of them have recommended acceptance.

Shoemaking town, page 3

Tempos, page 29

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Utilities carry on as optimism wanes

THE recession-is-over bandwagon, driven by last week's flurry of positive economic indicators, rolled optimistically into the new trading account, with shares being marked up significantly throughout the morning.

The optimism, also fuelled by hopes that the Bundesbank might lower German rates on Thursday, failed initially even to be denied by a string of

A positive recommendation from CL Laing, the broker, helped lift Brixton Estate, the property group, 5p to 189p. Laing says it is its favourite performer in a sector which it says has become synonymous with dividend cuts and rescue rights and convertible issues. Laing forecasts a total dividend of 8.4p when the company announces results soon.

companies going ex-dividend — worth a negative 4.5 points on the FT-SE 100 index.

Towards late morning the index was sporting gains of nearly 20 points. Among equities being marked up were the utilities, hurt last week as institutions moved into cyclical recovery stocks.

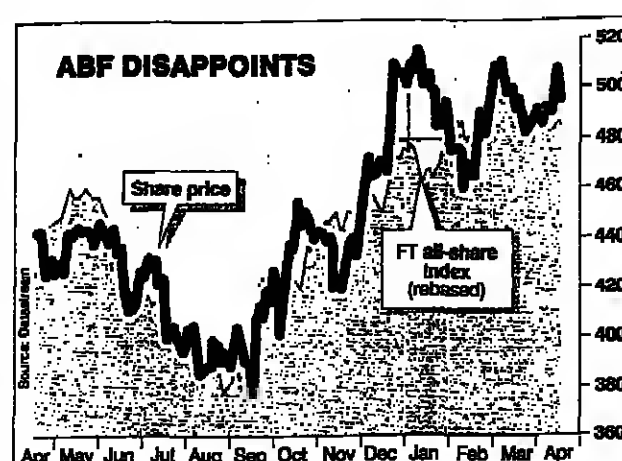
A report that British securities had turned bullish on the sector saw West's West add 9p to 576p, North West 7p to 498p, and Thames

Water 6p to 519p. Flowing along in tandem were Anglian Water, up 5p to 510p, Severn Trent ahead 5p to 496p and Southern Water up 4p to 518p.

The electricity distributors also recovered. Norwex firmed 8p to 516p, while Midlands Electricity added the same to 486p. East Midlands were ahead 7p to 458p. London Electricity added 6p to 476p, and Eastern Electricity rose 4p to 470p. Among the generators, National Power moved 3p higher to 344p, as did Powergen to 350p.

But as the day progressed, the FT-SE's confident beginning began to fray from 1993, with the continuing strident dispute between the tunnel operator and the 10-strong Transmanche Anglo-French construction consortium over cost overruns on the £9 billion project. It now appears the tunnel's completion, already put back from this summer to next December, might now not bloom before next spring.

Meanwhile, Tim Potter, AB Foods' chairman, said the numbers were disappointing and the shares remained a "sell". They fell 16p to 479p. He is sticking with his full-year pre-tax forecast for the group of £302 million. "The company is regarded as a resilient, archetypal defensive stock and mar-



ket conditions are not favourable to that type of investment at present," he said. Wembley, whose flagship stadium has seen much activity in recent weeks, were off 2p to 525p, before results later this week. Smith New Court, the company broker, thinks trading will be broken, but that exceptional debits could push Wembley into final pre-tax losses of around £17 million. Istock Johnson, the brickmaker, added 3p to 54p despite a well-flagged loss of £27.6 million for the year to end-December. The bulls are talking recovery play. But sceptics like Mark Hake, an analyst at Nikko Securities, say it is more a "don't-hold-

your-breath" play. He predicts a further £4 million loss this year, followed by a modest £1.5 million return to profit in 1994. "The collapse in pulp prices has affected Istock's pulp division badly and I think any recovery will be a long time coming," said Mr Hake. Another doubter — this time of cheaper money from Mr Lamont — is Ian Harnett, chief economist at Strauss Turbomechanics. He said the recent positive data indicated that recovery was under way without further government stimulus via eased monetary policy. But the optimism persists and helped to push the banks ahead. NatWest and Barclays both firmed, by 7p to 462p, and 6p to 414p respectively. TSB added 2p to 180p, Royal Bank of Scotland rose 3p to 257p. Lloyds fell a penny to 525p after 530p earlier, and Abbey National firmed 6p to 378p.

The adage that breaking up is hard to do was spotlighted by the differing treatments to two of Britain's biggest names, British Aerospace and ICI. While BAe added 15p to 289p on reports of a leading broker grouping the group a 5p share break-up value, ICI lost 1p to 511.79p on comment that having off the drugs arm from chemicals will make the two individuals less than the married couple. The prospectus on

the flotation of Zeneca is due tomorrow. Meanwhile, among the insurers, General Accident — one of the many which went ex-dividend yesterday — fell 14p to 576p. It was reported that the descent was nudged on also by a sell note from NatWest Securities, but this was later denied by the broker.

Glits traded quietly, generally, and around one-eighth. The market gained a little confidence when Smith New Court confirmed it has joined the chorus of economic optimism. SNC said in the past month it has issued as many profit upgrades as downgrades, contrasting markedly with the more bearish stance up to early March when two downgrades oozed out for each upgrade.

down before today's details on the £2-£3 billion treasury auction due later this week. The increased risk of inflation had helped to depress sentiment, said one dealer. Sterling eased up slightly against the dollar to \$1.54 compared with its opening level of \$1.5295. The pound fell back a little against the D-mark to 2.4630 against an opening level of 2.4678.

New York — Shares were brought down by program selling in late morning trading, but traders expected a small bounce before the close. "Program selling has hit the tape," said Ron Dorn, director of institutional trading at C. King and Associates. "It's the reverse of Friday when we were boosted by program buying."

The Dow Jones industrial average was down 15 points at 3,464 and shares falling in value led those advancing by almost two to one.

Frankfurt — The 30-share DAX index was expected to test 1,700 this week after solid gains yesterday based on speculation that the Bundesbank will cut its 9 per cent Lombard rate and possibly also its 7.5 per cent discount rate on Thursday. With financials benefiting especially from the rate talk, the DAX rose 14.45 points or 0.86 per cent to close at 1,693.30.

Sydney — Shares slipped as profit takers cashed in on last week's gains, dragging the key

market indicator below 1,700 points. "There has been quite a bit of profit-taking predicated by the fact that the Nikkei dropped below 20,000 for the first time in a while. All the leaders are being sold off, led by BHP and National Australia, but it is a healthy respite," a broker said. The All-ordinaries index closed down 6.8 points at 1,696.4.

Hong Kong — The market closed slightly lower amid light profit-taking aimed at bank shares, brokers said. The blue chip Hang Seng index lost 17.00 points to end the day at 6,680.15, after reaching a day's high of 6,709.38 in early afternoon trade.

Singapore — The 30-share Straits Times industrial index recorded a new closing high of 1,772.02, the fourth straight session it has ended at a new closing high, dealers said. The index, which rose 8.67 points from Friday's close, was supported by institutional and retail buying but was off the all-time tied high of 1,781.39 set earlier in the day.

Nikkei slides as yen reaches post-war high against dollar

FROM REUTERS IN TOKYO

SHARES closed lower in Tokyo yesterday on profit-taking triggered by the sharp rise in the yen against the dollar, but the Nikkei average crawled back above the 20,000 level on arbitrage buying.

During early trading, the Nikkei had fallen below the psychological support level for the first time since last Tuesday.

The Nikkei had risen about 4,000 points in a month and a half, and needed a substantial push to test the upside," said Koichi Osada, an analyst with Nikko Securities. "I would say today's losses were modest com-

pared with those gains." The 225-share Nikkei average slid 185.52 points or 0.91 per cent to 20,112.34, with an estimated 370 million shares traded, compared with 750 million on Friday.

The market had opened lower after the yen's rise against the dollar in New York on Friday and kept sliding to a low of 19,890.47, down 407.39, as the yen kept climbing.

But buying by public pension funds and arbitrageurs came in during the afternoon and pushed prices back up. Brokers said that all eyes were now on Japan's March money supply data, which is

due for release today. They said bargain-hunting was likely to emerge if the figures show continued growth, but if the data show money supply had shrunk, the market may be in for a strong correction.

The brokers added that the market was standing on fragile ground as the recent bull run had been driven mainly by individuals and brokerage dealers on short-term buying. "The dollar plunged to a post-war record low of 111.40 yen at the opening of trading in Tokyo yesterday and continued to fall all day to a new record closing low of ¥110.95.



Yen in demand: the dollar fell to a record low on the Tokyo foreign exchange market

Poorer countries 'will grow faster'

FROM REUTERS IN WASHINGTON

OUTPUT of developing countries is likely to grow at an average of about 4.7 per cent a year over the next decade, nearly double what they achieved in the 1980s, according to projections from the World Bank.

The international lending agency said the increased economic power of developing countries reflected "wide-ranging, and often painful, economic policy reforms", rather than greatly increased aid from wealthier countries. Developing countries grew by 2.7 per cent a year between

1982 and 1992. In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, growth is expected to increase by about two percentage points a year through the 1990s as the shift to a market economy begins to pay off. Latin America is expected to continue its recovery. Sub-Saharan Africa is also expected to grow faster, but not much faster than population. The Middle East and North Africa are expected to move ahead by 4 or 5 per cent, the fastest since the 1970s. Growth in East Asia is forecast to be significant.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICES

FLETCHER DISPOSAL SERVICES LIMITED
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RECENT ISSUES

Anglo United Wtd	217	+
Brown (D) (170)	217	+
Daily Lloyd Leisure (150) 171	+	
Fleming Emerging Mkts 103		
Fryn & Col US Smiler Co 102		
Fryn & Col US Smiler W 41		
Hambros Inv Serv (138) 145		
Holliday Chemical (109) 209		
Pilot Investment W 97		
Pilot Investment W 27		
Quality Software (180) 479	+	10

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MAJOR CHANGES

Standard Chart	7230 (+180)
Whitbread 'B'	8850 (+100)
SKF 'B'	8750 (+120)
Smithline	7320 (+200)
Lloyds Abbey	4160 (+130)
B Aerospace	2880 (+140)
Quarto	2240 (+180)
Sagpi	3500 (+170)
Sage Group	5840 (+150)
Govett	2970 (+140)

BRITISH FUNDS

100% Short	12.1	12.1
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n selling hits late morning

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Singapore — Straits Times recorded a new high of 1,772.02, the highest since last Friday's record of 1,781.39.

STREET

Morton's tunnel vision now in the hands of contractors

As the Channel project runs into more trouble, Martin Waller looks at the animosity that exists between Eurotunnel and TML, the contractor

Sir Alastair Morton, chief executive of Eurotunnel, is a combative man not averse to singling out his critics for personal criticism in return. He is also one of the very few with the necessary qualities of endurance, pluck, drive and experience of tough situations to kick-start one of the engineering wonders of the world. It has been questioned whether he is the right man to finish the project. Sir Alastair loathes being forced to concede anything, but he has had to accept that the future of the Channel tunnel is effectively out of his hands and in those of the contractors.

Any builder in charge of the site until the building is finished. But it was significant that yesterday, for the first time since the November 1987 share issue and simultaneous start of drilling work on the English shore, Eurotunnel was unable to estimate when the tunnel would open.

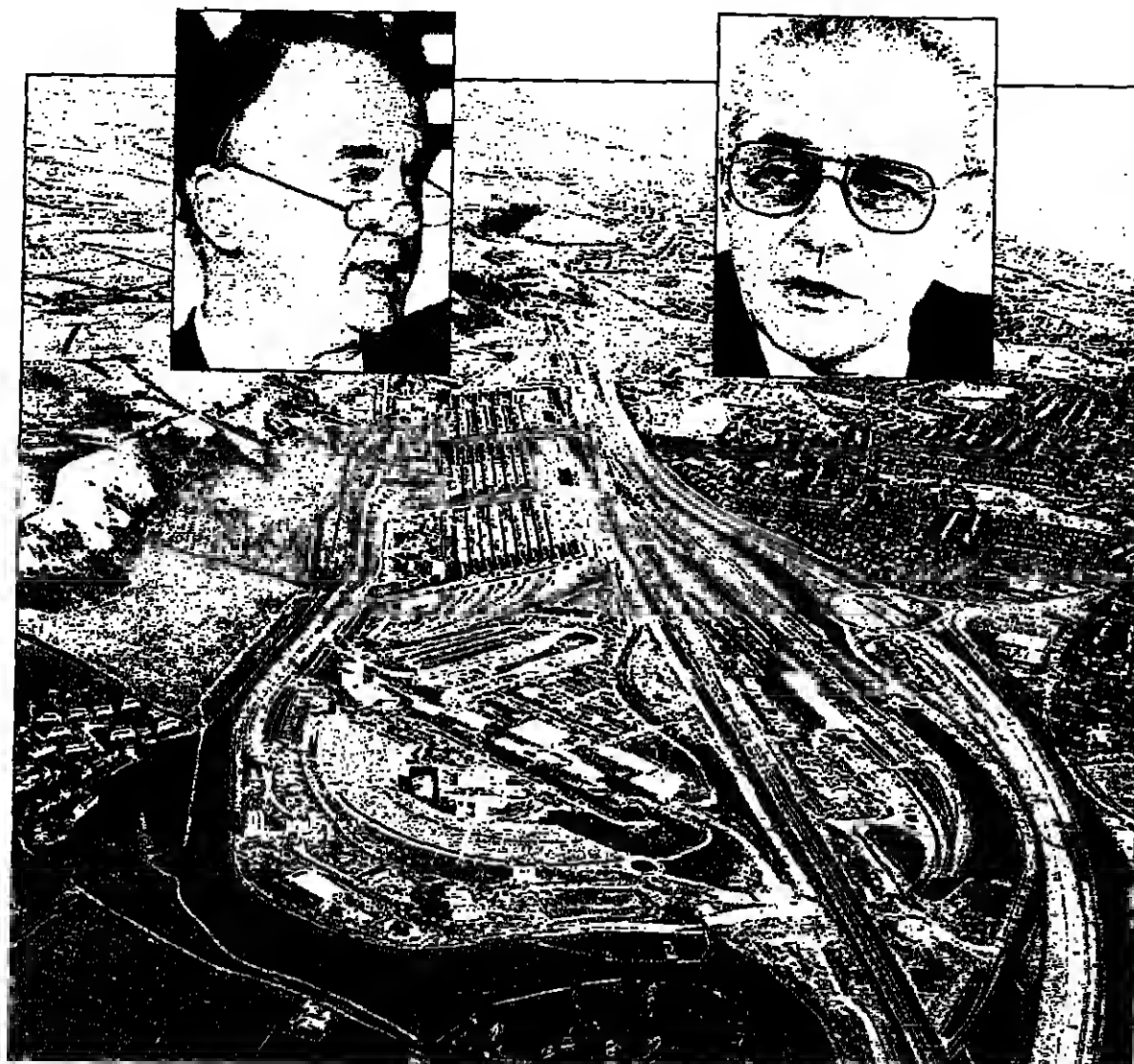
Sir Alastair and his board, including his French co-chairman André Bénard, are now separated from the builders by an animosity that has long since degenerated into name-calling and spite. Sir Alastair accuses TML, the ten-company consortium, of blackmail, and likens the management to recalcitrant children. Eurotunnel claims TML stoops so low as to change locks deliberately and disconnect electricity supplies on site to inconvenience its operatives.

TML, whose chief executive is Jack Lemley, was barred by the original contract from comment and have been unable to match Sir Alastair's insults in public. In private, they paint a picture of an unbending, unprincipled, obstructive negotiator who only responds to the ultimate sanction of legal action. This is hardly surprising. The tunnel is almost finished and will eventually open, but at an uneconomic cost. The issue is how much of the extra costs is to be borne by Eurotunnel shareholders and how much by the shareholders of the TML companies.

A total of £6.75 billion has already been spent, against latest estimates of £9.75 billion that will be needed before the project starts to generate more cash than it absorbs in 1997. Many of the future costs are to service debts rather than on physical assets. Sir Alastair himself, pledging to be open for business before next year's results briefing, stressed yesterday: "The line of spiralling costs is just not running any more."

Much of the diplomacy in the long-running dispute between client and builder has been carried out in the columns of the press, and both sides have been happy to strike attitudes that have been some way from reality. Sir Alastair's refusal to name a firm opening date can be seen as a bid to deflect blame for yet more delays, widely expected in the City but not yet publicly conceded by him.

His opening stance is simple. TML



End of the line: the Channel terminal at Folkestone. Above left, Sir Alastair and, right, Jack Lemley

and Eurotunnel agreed back in 1986, after 17 months of discussion — much of which centred around that very point — that the tunnel would be built for a fixed fee. If costs ran over, TML would pay the excess. If they came in under budget, they kept the extra. But as any householder who has agreed a fixed price contract with a builder knows, the arguments always start about supposed changes in specifications.

The dispute centres on the cost of the fixed equipment operating the shuttles that will run between England and France. The actual physical tunnel is built and paid for. There is a second important and allied dispute, probably heading for the courts, between Eurotunnel and the manufacturers of the passenger shuttles, a consortium led by Bombardier, the Canadian company. This has frozen work at the Bruges plant where they are being built, with 12 completed shuttles already piled up on site and denied delivery to the project. In this dispute, TML, which placed the contract as procurement agent for Eurotunnel, is the uncomfortable intermediary.

The fixed equipment bill was set in the original contract at £520 million, at 1985 prices not adjusted for intervening inflation. Eurotunnel has admitted that extra work has been done since, as part of the normal pattern of variations on such a job, has moved this up to £720 million. The contractors want £1.45 billion. "The project has changed beyond all recognition," said one source yesterday.

"It does not compare with the original contract. They ordered a bungalow, and they want a block of flats for the same price."

The two have been entangled in apparently interminable skirmishing since the start of the decade. TML won a round in March 1992 when the panel set up to arbitrate agreed that £50 million a month of interim payments would be made pending an eventual settlement. Eurotunnel last year offered a complex package worth £1.2 billion, £900 million in cash and the rest in some nebulous sort of equity that the builders could hold in lieu of payment for an ill-defined period. The builders, who needed cash urgently and were wary of being landed with shares in what was clearly a volatile business, shied away. That decision, in retrospect, could prove a bad one. The offer was withdrawn and can logically no longer be put back on the table, as a share issue would now require sanction of Eurotunnel's shareholders.

The building industry was in a bad shape last year and recent results from the five British members of the consortium have thrown this into sharp relief. Heavy losses have been the order of the day, and at least one is probably still afloat only by the good grace of its bankers. The five have taken some £100 million of write-offs from the project, but if their estimates are correct and they fail to achieve an acceptable settlement,

more will be needed. Faced with legal defeat at the hands of the arbitration panel, Sir Alastair responded in typical fashion and went to higher authority.

The International Chamber of Commerce agreed that rather than put in one huge claim, the contractors would have to itemise separate claims for each alleged cost over-run, making their task substantially more difficult.

Sir Alastair, who favours a phased opening so at least some revenue will trickle in during the early months of next year, says if TML co-operates, rail taking heavy goods vehicles through could start on December 15 and freight a fortnight later. The last component, human beings, would start to go through in February. TML, pushed for a date, mumbles about summer 1994. The builders say they are contracted to provide for a complete service from the off, and a phased start would require yet another variation of the original terms.

Eurotunnel has the sanction, as of August, to claim liquidated damages for the contractors missing an earlier deadline for opening. Such payment, it claims, would outweigh any loss of revenue for a delayed opening next year. But the company has another deadline: a waiver from its banks will run out in March and require renewal.

The banks are unlikely to push the company into receivership, and so replace the management so close to opening. But the failure of one of the contractors has implications that even Eurotunnel itself is unsure of.

TEMPUS

No jam tomorrow

THE CBI's latest distributive trades survey seems to suggest that recovery is gathering pace. Growth in high street sales volumes is at its highest rate for nearly 18 months.

The apparent arrival of that elusive creature, the consumer-led recovery, should provide a welcome boost to the retail sector, which has remained sluggish despite unexpectedly creditable results recently from several players such as Kingfisher, Next, Laura Ashley and T. S. Jones. The sector's average historic p/e ratio is still higher than the market average although the premium has fallen from 35 to 20 per cent since last year. However, investors looking to prosper from a sudden bull run should look elsewhere.

Despite the CBI's good news, there is an unsettling fear that whatever gains are made by recovery will be taken back by tax increases

later in the year. In an attempt to make his numbers add up, the Chancellor will allow us jam today but not tomorrow. Retailers, and indeed the economy, are stuck in a Catch 22 situation — the stronger the upturn, the greater the likelihood of tax increases.

Consumer confidence has proved to be fragile and fickle at the best of times. This is largely why retailers, and indeed manufacturers, have been reluctant to pass on price increases of imports resulting from devaluation. But there is a limit to how much pain any company is willing to bear, particularly if the gross margin is suffering. Yesterday's figures from the CBI may give retailers the confidence to raise prices, believing there is now sufficient demand to absorb any increases. There is as yet no overwhelming evidence to support this contention.

Eurotunnel

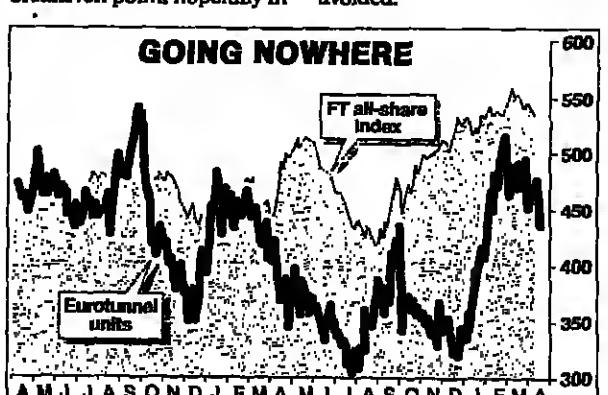
IF EUROTUNNEL shareholders thought that completion of construction of the tunnel would herald the end of their troubles, then they will be sorely disappointed. As the project nears its operational phase, the uncertainties are increasing not diminishing.

The group is not merely in dispute with TML, its contractor. It is also engaged in similar battles with both the governments and national railways of the UK and France. Eurotunnel cannot afford to lose any of these encounters, since the cost overruns and delays have effectively eliminated shareholders' equity. Resolving the financial frictions with TML is particularly critical, as its outcome determines the opening date, and hence the revenue stream, of the

project. Any prospect of revenue in 1993 has already been written off, and the forecast for 1994 has been virtually halved to £260 million.

The group now anticipates that its existing funds will be exhausted by mid-1994, necessitating the injection of a further £850 million to tide the company over to its cash breakeven point, hopefully in

1997. Eurotunnel has agreed a renewed waiver with its banks extending to May 1994, but this depends on the tunnel opening by next March. If it fails to do so, the banks are legally entitled to put the group into receivership. If there is one thing the market hates, it is uncertainty. The shares are best avoided.



Berisford

BERISFORD sorely needs a clean and simple acquisition to demonstrate to its weary followers that there really is life beyond the lost years of sugar and sour property ventures. Its choice of the Clarke shoe group, which would fulfil its ambitions of managing a worldwide business with recovery potential, may not prove as easy a fit as it would like to think.

Berisford needs only a simple majority of Clarke's shareholders to vote yes to a May 7 resolution that Clarke sell its brands and assets, to trigger the process whereby Berisford makes a formal cash bid. This would be 21.3p, plus 26p deferred until Clarke has sold surplus property, with a share alternative. Compared with a privately traded price of 90p and a one-time high of 200p, Clarke shareholders may well jump. But dissidents claiming to speak for more than 50 per cent of eligible votes insist that the proposals drive a coach and horses through Clarke's pride of association and are determined to fight all the way. Berisford, mean-

while, remains suspended, ironically from the food manufacturing sector.

AB Foods

TOMKINS has taken on a tough task with RHM if results from Associated British Foods, the other big player in the British bread market, are anything to go by. Gary Weston, the ABF chairman, would only concede that milling and baking profit fell by £9-10 million in the first half, which analysts translate into a breakeven. Mr Weston does not want to give much away to Tomkins, which has have yet to pronounce on rationalisation moves.

ABF meanwhile had a mixed half year, but its lack of holding. Investment income rose from £35 million to £45 million, thanks to the impact of Black Wednesday, which also helped to add 10 per cent to profits of British Sugar. Full-year profits should rise from £286 million to about £300 million.

Ibstock Johnsen

Blue Circle's announcement of cement price increases is a welcome fillip to a depressed

building materials market and complements noises from Ibstock Johnsen about possible price increases for bricks. Blue Circle boasts about 48 per cent of the cement market in the UK and leads prices.

Ibstock is not in such a favourable position. Its market share is smaller and the area to which prices are thought to be hardening is the lower-margin house-building sector. Paper pulp production in Portugal remains a millstone around the company's neck. Sale of the business would be sensible but unlikely until overcapacity in European paper markets is reduced.

However, Ibstock has done much of the hard slog and the cost is in last year's £28 million exceptional charge. Rationalisation of smaller factories means Ibstock can push more product through the larger plants, keeping fixed costs down. In the long run that should help the company to improve the operating margin and if volumes pick up this year the benefit of more efficient production should bring the group back into profit.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Into Morgan's garden, Maude

THE CITY has proved a good political hinterland for Francis Maude, a former financial secretary to the Treasury and corporate affairs minister who lost his seat in the last general election. Maude, one of the bright young things of the Thatcher years, has made quite a career for himself putting into practice his political commitment to privatisation. After just one year as head of privatisation with Salomon Brothers, Maude has jumped ship to Morgan Stanley, Salomon's biggest rival. He becomes global head of privatisation and joins the board of Morgan Stanley International next month. In his new, no doubt lucrative, post, Maude will handle privatisation work stretching from EC member states to various Eastern European and South American countries. His workload will be heavy. Morgan Stanley is handling the privatisations of Rhône-Poulenc, the French chemicals company and Argenteria, the Spanish bank, among others. Maude, who explains that life in the City is just as "immensely stimulating" as life in government, nonetheless plans to stand in the next general election.

Greig tolling

NEWS that Greig Middleton, the stockbroker, is expanding into Edinburgh has struck some terror into the hearts of senior management at Bell Lawrie White, the Scottish stockbroking firm bought

from TSB by Brewin Dolphin. Resignations have plagued Bell Lawrie since its new London owners moved in last week, and management is said to be worried that Greig will poach the best of its search and sales staff. Bill Blair, Bell Lawrie's star pharmaceutical analyst, walked out last week only to be snapped up by Greig. And yesterday, David Campbell, Bell Lawrie's utilities analyst, started work at Greig in Glasgow. But Greig insists it is not trying to woo Bell Lawrie staff. Most of the back office staff were registering with the local job centres yesterday after Jack Gates, Brewin's operations director, called staff together at Bell Lawrie's Drumshough offices last Thursday to tell them the merged firm would soon operate with "a skeleton staff". Meanwhile, resignations continue. Ian Nairn, the finance director who sorted out Bell Lawrie's back office two years ago after two large Stock Exchange fines, resigned as the

ink on the deal dried. Dawn Wardrobe, personnel manager, has also left.

One for Poirot

ONE of the least publicised requirements of the Maastricht Treaty is that before a single currency becomes a reality national debt must not exceed 60 per cent of gross national product. Sadly for Belgium, Europe's most enthusiastic proponent of monetary union, national debt appears to expand each day. Belgian national debt, at 122 per cent of GNP, stood at BF8.9 trillion (£178 billion) yesterday morning. By yesterday afternoon, it grew by BF70 million (£1.4 million) thanks to a daylight robbery at the Azlon offices of the Belgian National Bank. The thieves escaped on foot.

Global glory

NIKE, Reebok, Adidas, Asics, Mizuno, New Balance... all the usual sponsors failed to realise the potential of the winner of this year's London Marathon, some suggesting Eamonn Martin was "too old". Now London Global Securities, more skilled by trade in the art of risk management, is basking in the glory of a gamble that paid huge PR dividends. The international stock loan specialist became the first City firm to sponsor a world-class athlete in the marathon at the insistence of Mike Hird, the firm's managing director. "Natural talent, great staying power and a blistering finish are all qualities Eamonn shares with London Global Securities," he boasts.

MELINDA WITTSTOCK



Tackling commission disclosure

From Mr John Butterfill, MP Sir, The report in your paper of the backing, given by Prudential Life Insurance and Allied Dunbar, to the OFT's recommendation that there should be full disclosure of commission for life products sold through independent intermediaries, comes as no surprise to me or many other members of Parliament who have taken an interest in this subject since we served on the committee stage of the Financial Services Act in 1986. Both the Prudential and Allied Dunbar are direct sales organisations which would be likely to benefit if sales through independent intermediaries were curtailed through crude commission disclosures.

What most of us on the committee agreed in 1986, and have continued to argue since, is that such a crude disclosure requirement would give a completely misleading impression to a potential investor. Investors are concerned to know what proportion of the premiums they pay for a life insurance product will eventually be invested on their behalf as compared to the proportion which will be consumed by the

various expenses of the life office, whether those expenses be commission, advertising, the payment of an in-house sales force or head office costs. It is almost certainly true that the total costs of many direct sales products will exceed the total costs sold through independent intermediaries.

What is needed for the protection of investors is a regime which requires all product providers to provide potential investors with a comprehensible document, giving the very best estimate of total costs of any given product in addition to estimates relating to surrender values etc. It is a matter of considerable regret to me and others that despite our best efforts we have not yet been able to convince the OFT and the Consumers' Association of what seems to us to be an obvious truth. We are concerned that if ministers were to accept the OFT recommendation, it could spell the death knell for independent advisers, particularly at a time when they are suffering from increased regulatory costs. Yours faithfully, JOHN BUTTERFILL, House of Commons, SW1.

Time for the Societies Commission to wake up

From Mr Len Arrowsmith Sir, I was a little amused and greatly frustrated to read your comments in The Times Good Friday City Diary concerning the flatteringly selective quotes about the Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society in its annual report.

I have written to the Building Societies Commission regularly over the past few years complaining that societies provide selective misleading information to members. Despite the statutory duties

placed on the Commission to ensure that voting members are properly informed it has failed to respond. Perhaps now that societies' documents have moved from the misleading category to the ludicrous the Building Societies Commission will wake up.

Yours faithfully, LEN ARROWSMITH, Maes Y Llan, Pen Y Bryn Road, Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd.

Vote against this dubious scrip dividend device

From R. Mitchell Sir, Tempus is right (Business News, April 14). To maintain dividends at all costs is bad for UK plc. But how many shareholders appreciate that scrip dividends are bad for those who take cash because of the

insidious effect of progressive dilution? As for the so-called 'enhanced scrip dividend' (Ladbroke, RTZ are examples), it would be more honestly described as the 'reduced cash dividend' since this is clearly the intention behind it.

May I urge all faced with the option to vote against this dubious device? Yours faithfully, R. MITCHELL, Murray Lodge, Burtons Lane, Chalfont St Giles, Bucks.

Associated British Foods

INTERIM RESULTS 1993

- Turnover £2,044 million, up 8%
- Profit before tax £161 million, up 7%
- Earnings per share 23.9p, up 13%
- Shareholders' funds £1,834 million, up 9%

The full unaudited interim statement for the 24 weeks to 27th February 1993 will be posted to shareholders on the 21st April 1993.

Associated British Foods plc, Weston Centre, 68 Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7LR, England.

TIME-SAVE TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

[illegible]

LIFE OPTIONS									
Series	Jul	Oct	Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct	Jan	Apr	Jul
1550	27	40	46	32	43	48			
1555	11	22	28	12	27	31			
1560	16	27	34	17	32	37			
1565	21	32	40	22	37	43			
1570	26	37	46	27	42	49			
1575	31	42	51	32	47	54			
1580	36	47	56	37	52	59			
1585	41	52	61	42	57	64			
1590	46	57	66	47	62	69			
1595	51	62	71	52	67	74			
1600	56	67	76	57	72	79			
1605	61	72	81	62	77	84			
1610	66	77	86	67	82	89			
1615	71	82	91	72	87	94			
1620	76	87	96	77	92	99			
1625	81	92	101	82	97	104			
1630	86	97	106	87	102	109			
1635	91	102	111	92	107	114			
1640	96	107	116	97	112	119			
1645	101	112	121	102	117	124			
1650	106	117	126	107	122	129			
1655	111	122	131	112	127	134			
1660	116	127	136	117	132	139			
1665	121	132	141	122	137	144			
1670	126	137	146	127	142	149			
1675	131	142	151	132	147	154			
1680	136	147	156	137	152	159			
1685	141	152	161	142	157	164			
1690	146	157	166	147	162	169			
1695	151	162	171	152	167	174			
1700	156	167	176	157	172	179			
1705	161	172	181	162	177	184			
1710	166	177	186	167	182	189			
1715	171	182	191	172	187	194			
1720	176	187	196	177	192	199			
1725	181	192	201	182	197	204			
1730	186	197	206	187	202	209			
1735	191	202	211	192	207	214			
1740	196	207	216	197	212	219			
1745	201	212	221	202	217	224			
1750	206	217	226	207	222	229			
1755	211	222	231	212	227	234			
1760	216	227	236	217	232	239			
1765	221	232	241	222	237	244			
1770	226	237	246	227	242	249			
1775	231	242	251	232	247	254			
1780	236	247	256	237	252	259			
1785	241	252	261	242	257	264			
1790	246	257	266	247	262	269			
1795	251	262	271	252	267	274			
1800	256	267	276	257	272	279			
1805	261	272	281	262	277	284			
1810	266	277	286	267	282	289			
1815	271	282	291	272	287	294			
1820	276	287	296	277	292	299			
1825	281	292	301	282	297	304			
1830	286	297	306	287	302	309			
1835	291	302	311	292	307	314			
1840	296	307	316	297	312	319			
1845	301	312	321	302	317	324			
1850	306	317	326	307	322	329			
1855	311	322	331	312	327	334			
1860	316	327	336	317	332	339			
1865	321	332	341	322	337	344			
1870	326	337	346	327	342	349			
1875	331	342	351	332	347	354			
1880	336	347	356	337	352	359			
1885	341	352	361	342	357	364			
1890	346	357	366	347	362	369			
1895	351	362	371	352	367	374			
1900	356	367	376	357	372	379			
1905	361	372	381	362	377	384			
1910	366	377	386	367	382	389			
1915	371	382	391	372	387	394			
1920	376	387	396	377	392	399			
1925	381	392	401	382	397	404			
1930	386	397	406	387	402	409			
1935	391	402	411	392	407	414			
1940	396	407	416	397	412	419			
1945	401	412	421	402	417	424			
1950	406	417	426	407	422	429			
1955	411	422	431	412	427	434			
1960	416	427	436	417	432	439			
1965	421	432	441	422	437	444			
1970	426	437	446	427	442	449			
1975	431	442	451	432	447	454			
1980	436	447	456	437	452	459			
1985	441	452	461	442	457	464			
1990	446	457	466	447	462	469			
1995	451	462	471	452	467	474			
2000	456	467	476	457	472	479			
2005	461	472	481	462	477	484			
2010	466	477	486	467	482	489			
2015	471	482	491	472	487	494			
2020	476	487	496	477	492	499			
2025	481	492	501	482	497	504			
2030	486	497	506	487	502	509			
2035	491	502	511	492	507	514			
2040	496	507	516	497	512	519			
2045	501	512	521	502	517	524			
2050	506	517	526	507	522	529			
2055	511	522	531	512	527	534			
2060	516	527	536	517	532	539			
2065	521	532	541	522	537	544			
2070	526	537	546	527	542	549			
2075	531	542	551	532	547	554			
2080	536	547	556	537	552	559			
2085	541	552	561	542	557	564			
2090	546	557	566	547	562	569			
2095	551	562	571	552	567	574			
2100	556	567	576	557	572	579			
2105	561	572	581	562	577	584			
2110	566	577	586	567	582	589			
2115	571	582	591	572	587	594			
2120	576	587	596	577	592	599			
2125	581	592	601	582	597	604			
2130	586	597	606	587	602	609			
2135	591	602	611	592	607	614			
2140	596	607	616	597	612	619			
2145	601	612	621	602	617	624			
2150	606	617	626	607	622	629			
2155	611	622	631	612	627	634			
2160	616	627	636	617	632	639			
2165	621	632	641	622	637	644			
2170	626	637	646	627	642	649			
2175	631	642	651	632	647	654			
2180	636	647	656	637	652	659			
2185	641	652	661	642	657	664			
2190	646	657	666	647	662	669			
2195	651	662	671	652	667	674			
2200	656	667	676	657	672	679			
2205	661	672	681	662	677	684			
2210	666	677	686	667	682	689			
2215	671	682	691	672	687	694			
2220	676	687	696	677	692	699			
2225	681	692	701	682	697	704			
2230	686	697	706	687	702	709			
2235	691	702	711	692	707	714			
2240	696	707	716	697	712	719			
2245	701	712	721	702	717	724			
2250	706	717	726	707	722	729			
2255	711	722	731	712	727	734			
2260	716	727	736	717	732	739			
2265	721	732	741	722	737	744			
2270	726	737	746	727	742	749			
2275	731	742	751	732	747	754			
2280	736	747	756	737	752	759			
2285	741	752	761	742	757	764			
2290	746	757	766	747	762	769			
2295	751	762	771	752	767	774			
2300	756	767	776	757	772	779			
2305	761	772	781	762	777	784			
2310	766	777	786	767	782	789			
2315	771	782	791	772	787	794			
2320	776	787	796	777	792	799			
2325	781	792	801	782	797	804			
2330	786	797	806	787	802	809			
2335	791	802	811	792	807	814			
2340	796	807	816	797	812	819			
2345	801	812	821	802	817	824			
2350	806	817	826	807	822	829			
2355	811	822	831	812	827	834			
2360	816	827	836	817	832	839			
2365	821	832	841	822	837	844			
2370	826	837	846	827	842	849			</

Portfolio

From our Portfolio Plus card check your eight share price movements on this page. Add them up to give you your weekly total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won a share of the daily prize money. Claim your share of the daily prize money on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No	Company	Group	Gain or Loss
1	Metrom (John)	Draperies	2.10
2	London Elec	Electricity	1.10
3	London Elec	Electricity	1.10
4	London Elec	Electricity	1.10
5	London Elec	Electricity	1.10
6	London Elec	Electricity	1.10
7	London Elec	Electricity	1.10
8	London Elec	Electricity	1.10

Please take into account any minus signs

£1,000 MATCH THE SHARES

If you have ticked off your eight share in our Match The Shares game today, claim your prize by telephoning 0254 53272 between 10.00am and 3.30pm (see the Sunday Times for full details)

Two winners equally share the Portfolio Plus prize of £2,000. They are Mr P Toman of London N4 and Mrs E Austin of St Nicholas, near Cardiff.

High Low Company Price Net Yld % P/E

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

BANKS, DISCOUNT, HP

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

BREWERS

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

BUILDING, ROADS

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

BUSINESS SERVICES

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

CHEMICALS, PLASTICS

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

DRAPERY, STORES

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

ELECTRICITY

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

FINANCE LAND

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

FINANCIAL TRUSTS

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

FOODS

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

HOTELS, CATERERS

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

INDUSTRIALS

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

INSURANCE

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

LEISURE

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

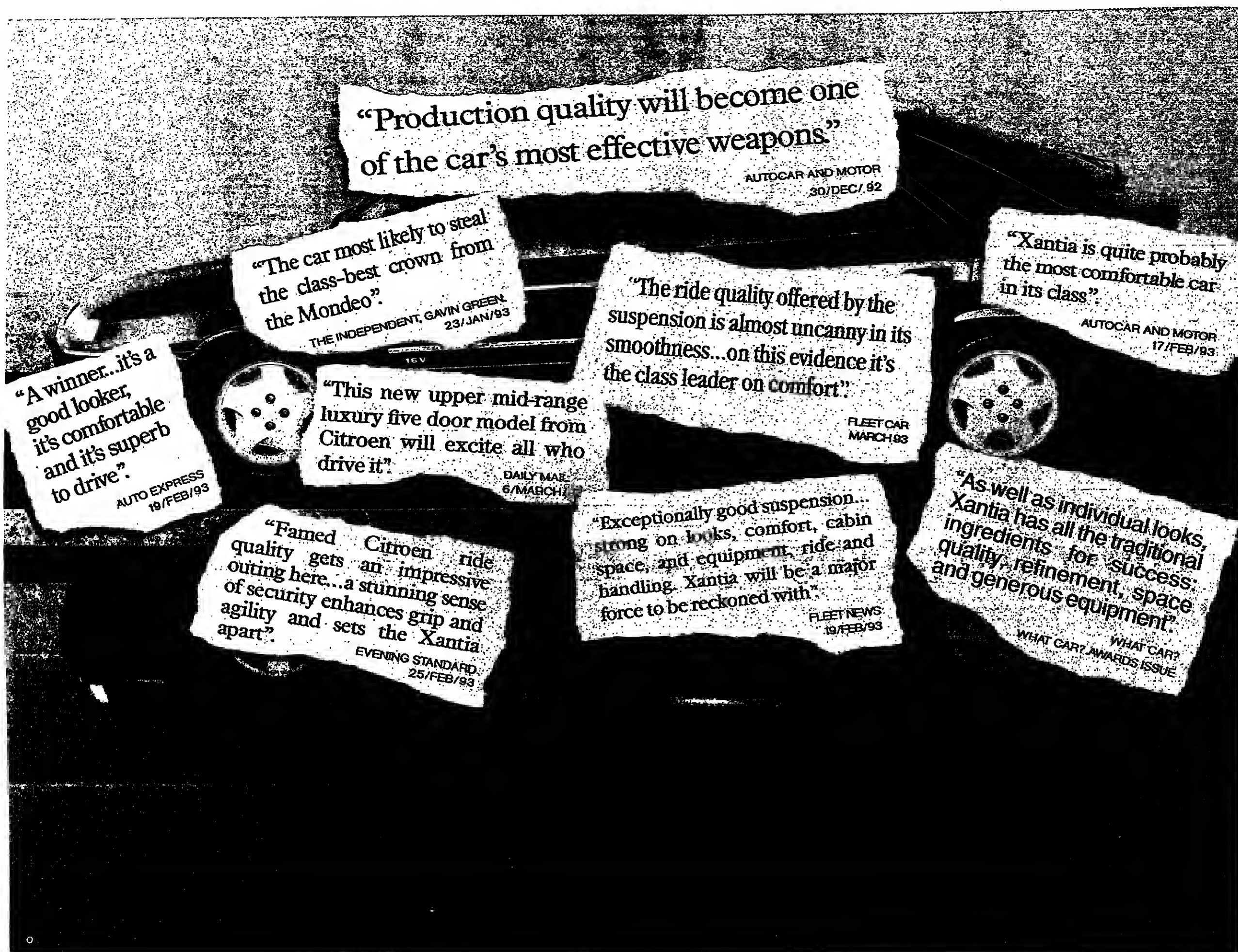
MINING

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
7	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
8	100	95	100	100	100	100	100

MOTORS, AIRCRAFT

1993	High	Low	Company	Price	Net Yld	%	P/E
1	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
2	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
3	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
4	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
5	100	95	100	100	100	100	100
6</							

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Address

Postcode

Current Car Make

Model Registration Letter

Petrol ☐ Diesel ☐ Saloon ☐ Estate ☐

Purchased: Company ☐ Private ☐

Intended Replacement Date: Month Year


CITROËN

مكتبة من الأصل

FLEET CARS

Accelerating on a smoother road

As the Fleet Show opens today at Silverstone, Vaughan Freeman assesses the condition of the company car sector

A cautiously upbeat car industry believes that increases in purchases for company fleets over the past three months are the most accurate indicators yet of a genuine resurgence in the economy.

After four years of recession, analysts predict that companies will be looking to renew aging car fleets after they have examined the best ways of turning the Budget's tax changes to their advantage.

The changes next April will gauge personal tax in kind on company cars on 35 per cent of the vehicle's retail price. The initial reactions to these changes were that a "dash for cash" would start as employees declined the company car in favour of an increased pay and benefits package.

However, longer reflection seems to indicate that the market is far from turning up its toes, except perhaps for the exception of the car that is exclusively a perk.

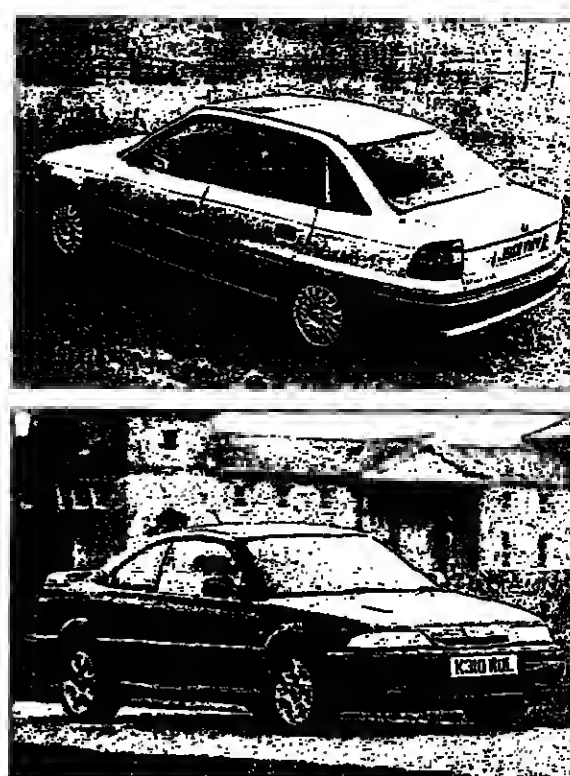
Such expensive business vehicles, which cover fewer than 2,500 business miles, may well be at risk in future, since they will attract a crippling tax burden. On the whole, analysts believe that fleets will thrive, though future profiles of company car fleets will change to include more diesel-engined vehicles and more larger-engined, low-specified cars.

Since company cars account for half the new cars bought annually in the United Kingdom, a figure which this year could reach 1.8 million sales, that is good news for both the economy and the automobile industry.

The leading manufacturers will have their wares on display at the Fleet Show at the Silverstone



Three's company: the Ford Escort, left, is the top-selling fleet car followed by the Fiesta, the Vauxhall Astra, top right, the Cavalier and the Rover 220, bottom



THE FLEET SHOW

The Fleet Show at Silverstone opens today and continues until Friday. It features the latest car models including the Ford Mondeo, Rover 600, Peugeot 306, Renault Safrane and Vauxhall Corsa, all of which can be test driven. Daily seminars sponsored by Lease Plan will look at the impact of changes in the taxation of company cars. There are 132 exhibitors. Entrance is free. Times: 9.30-5pm today; 9.30-7pm tomorrow; 9.30-5pm on Thursday and 9.30-4pm on Friday. There is a chauffeur service from Milton Keynes station.

ment and the order flow for new vehicles is picking up steadily. The market is clearly on the up."

Mr Clayton sees two areas of demand: from fleets which have extended the lives of their vehicles, to perhaps 90,000 miles, and which now have to replace them; and from companies adding extra vehicles.

The optimism is also detected by Colin McLean, the chairman of the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association leasing com-

mittee, and managing director of Highway Vehicle Leasing. He says: "The Budget changes will, I think, particularly hit cars which are presently tax efficient, those just under the £19,250 and 2-litre thresholds."

"From April next year, somebody driving a car like that will see their tax rise something like 48 per cent, no matter what business mileage they do."

Mr McLean expects such drivers instead to take less expensive cars,

costing about £17,000, while others, prepared to stay with more costly vehicles, will buy them with bigger engines, possibly diesels.

Though perk car owners, a tiny minority of company car fleets, may have to give up their cars, research has consistently shown that company car users are reluctant to make such a move. In most cases it is, anyway, impossible for them to do so: an estimated 80 per cent of fleet cars are purely tools for work, run by service engineers, sales representatives and others who cover high work mileages.

If they were to run their own cars for work, they would need massive recompense from employers for fuel and maintenance. Incomes Data Services reported in 1992 that companies considering withdrawing company cars from their staff would need to provide cash compensation worth between £178 and £750 a month.

Research from the Confederation of British Industry and the

management consultants Towers Perrin reiterated the popularity of the company car, with 98 per cent of respondents placing it as the leading attraction, ahead of 22 other non-cash benefits.

If employees are committed to their cars, then so, too, are their employers. The Hertz Leasing report on the company car, published this month, states: "Three-quarters of financial directors are committed to company cars and will not be considering alternative forms of compensation in the foreseeable future. The company car remains a powerful means of providing mobility and non-financial benefits for the workforce."

The growing interest in replenishing and expanding company car fleets is probably the most accurate indicator we have that the economy as a whole is at last turning round. Although the days of the perk car may be numbered, the company car is here to stay.

Budget for the future

When the Chancellor finally announced the basis for company car taxation for 1994 onwards, the fleet industry awarded itself a collective pat on the back. The response, however, fell short of jubilation because, although a key recommendation had been accepted, reservations rubbed the edge off the industry's success.

With 67 per cent of respondents to the Inland Revenue's consultative document on benefit-in-kind taxation opposing the proposed introduction of price bands, the Treasury could hardly have ignored the industry's antipathy towards its original banding suggestion. Instead, a scale charge based on a straight 35 per cent of list price will replace the current regime next spring. The Chancellor, however, has retained the existing handlings for business mileage and a discount structure; the full rate of tax will be paid only by drivers of fewer than 2,500 business miles a year. Those doing 2,500-18,000 work miles will benefit from a discount of a third. Drivers covering more than 18,000 a year for work will get two-thirds off.

The Finance and Leasing Association, for one, will continue to lobby for a review of the arrangement, seeing it as illogical, but on the whole industry reaction has been positive. "Prior to Budget day we were concerned the government had made up its mind to instate its published proposals, so we are delighted it has listened to the industry's representations," says Colin McLean, chairman of the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association leasing committee, and managing director of Highway Vehicle Leasing.

Initially, it is drivers with cars priced just under the existing £19,250 breakpoint who will be among the main losers once the new scheme is introduced. "If offered a Rover 820 2.0Si this year, which has been strategically priced at £18,395 to capitalise on the current system, I would recommend drivers to think twice because they could be over £65 a month worse off come spring 1994," says Nick Brown, managing director of Trimco Leasing.

Roger King, director of public affairs for the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, believes that the 35 per cent charge is too high. "At 35 per cent some drivers will switch over to cash," he says. "The charge should be more like 25 per cent. What is more, the lack of any cap will penalise manufacturers like Aston Martin who provide employment and embody engineering excellence in the UK."

The general view, however, is that "essential" company car drivers will have little choice but to keep their cars, even though they could be slightly worse off under the new regime. What they may well do is opt for a lower-specification, smaller-engined, cheaper car to try to reduce tax liability.

The Chancellor was faced with a trade-off between simplicity and equity. Every scheme has winners and losers. The fleet industry is confident that, on balance, he has backed a winner.

MERYL CUMBER

Safe, spacious and sporty... the new luxury fleet cars have all this and still make top company personnel look the business

Power and prestige

Once upon a time a company boss looking for the car to reflect his position had the choice of either a Jaguar or, well, a Jaguar. Today true prestige on four wheels is found behind half a dozen or so makers' emblems and even a discerning director is spoilt for choice.

Sales of such cars have suffered over the past three years. Top management has been reluctant to buy, in case it tempted the recessionary fates or sent the wrong message to the workforce. Now, continued investment by manufacturers determined to improve their vehicles, plus a general feeling that the economy is finally recovering, are filtering through. March saw new car sales rise for the sixth consecutive month.

Jaguar is among those enjoying

a change of fortune, with sales reaching 1,622 for the first quarter compared with 1,517 for the same period last year. The Coventry manufacturer has spent an estimated £35 million introducing entirely new components and upgrading elements for the 1993 model range. The XJ6 saloon comes in 3.2-litre and 4-litre form, with prices ranging from £26,200 to £44,200.

Now topping the range is the all-new XJ12 with a V12 6-litre engine, costing £46,600, or £51,700 for the Daimler Double Six version. Wedded to the old Jaguar virtues of grace, space and pace is a three-year warranty, on top of which the V12 adds a daunting 155mph top speed.

The Jaguar is not the roomiest of luxury cars, even in the back where

chauffeur-driven cars could do with extra inches. It is, though, hugely reassuring, making you feel good, even privileged, each time you wrap the car around you and, at £26,000 upwards, it is fiercely good value.

At Saab the 9000CS is just fleet. Priced at £23,500, this 2.3-litre turbo-charged car is not as fast flat-out as Jaguar's 6-litre XJ12, but acceleration is massive. The cabin is close fitting and swathed in leather. The car feels built of bricks and its speed seems to bend some elementary law of physics.

In fact, the front-wheel-drive Saab has difficulty getting the power on to the road from a standing start. This is little matter, since burning away from the lights is no trick for the ambitious director, or indeed anyone sane, to



Grace, space and pace: the Jaguar XJ6 is "fiercely good value"

indulge in. The acceleration is available at almost any speed, however, making overtaking a safe pastime.

The vagaries of the currency markets have seen prices of cars from other European manufacturers rise, and sales accordingly fall.

Mercedes-Benz sales are down 12.5 per cent for the first quarter to 5,559, sales of BMW 5-Series are down 9 per cent to 2,712 and big Volvos are down 20 per cent.

BMW's 7-Series now has a new V8 4-litre engine enabling it to compete against the 400SE from

Mercedes-Benz. At almost £53,000 for the Mercedes, and £40,000 for the BMW, Teutonic engineering brilliance does not come cheap. BMW has long had the sporting image edge on Mercedes-Benz, but while the interior comfort and appointment is first class, it cannot match the sheer space of the Mercedes.

From Volvo comes the 850, a relative newcomer and one which stunned the motoring press as a Volvo that is actually fun to drive. While no manufacturer can match Volvo's image as a purveyor of safe cars, few of them have suffered from a reputation of building cars with all the sport and thrill content of a baked potato. The 2.5-litre 850 GLE (£20,000) uses a five-cylinder engine, developed with sports car maker Porsche, which is capable of taking the Bertone-styled car to a 134mph top speed.

VAUGHAN FREEMAN

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Leasing is becoming an increasingly attractive option for companies seeking to release their capital

According to 75 per cent of the Finance and Leasing Association's members, demand for motor finance will increase over the next few months. General optimism is explained by the anticipated release of pent-up demand for cars and the trend away from purchasing and towards third party financing.

There are a number of questions to answer before selecting the method of funding. Clive Tulloch, tax partner at Coopers & Lybrand and editor of the CCH Company Car Tax Guide, identifies them as:

- What level of external service support is necessary?
- How much risk is the company prepared to bear?

□ What is the VAT and tax position of the company?

□ Does it matter if the fleet appears on the balance sheet?

Research for the 1993 Hertz Report found that the proportion of companies incorporating contract hire into their funding mix had increased by 9 per cent to 44 per cent compared with a similar survey in 1992. But the percentage buying all or some of its fleet remained unchanged at 55 per cent. The result confirms the increasing popularity of contract hire and a wider mix of methods within funding portfolios. The

attraction of outright purchase lies in the retention of complete control by the fleet user, who also gains writing-down benefits and any profit on the sale of the vehicles. There are, however, a number of disadvantages.

VAT on car acquisitions is not recoverable (although it is on running costs) and the fleet must be shown on the owner's balance sheet, creating gearing ratio implications. Further, capital which could be used more productively elsewhere in the business will be tied, Pete McAree, national sales manager of Fleet Management

Services, predicts a shift from outright purchase because many companies will need to find additional capital. His company has been buying fleets from businesses to lease them back.

"The growing demand for sale and leaseback reproduces the pattern of the early 1980s when companies were faced with the need to raise cash to finance renewed growth," he recalls.

Among leasing options, only finance leasing is declining in popularity due to relative inflexibility. The lessor owns the fleet throughout the lease period but the

lessee carries all the risks of ownership, including those of resale value.

VAT is recoverable on the finance lease's fixed monthly instalments but the asset must appear on the lessee's balance sheet and is subject to the £3,000 annual writing-down allowance limit. The cap reduces cost-effectiveness of cars priced over £12,000.

Contract hire, on the other hand, is growing in popularity. In what is, in effect, a long-term rental arrangement, the lessee avoids all the risks, but also the rewards, of ownership in return for

a fixed monthly rental agreed at the outset. The fleet is no longer an asset and therefore does not appear on the balance sheet.

The lessor's purchasing power will secure greater price discounts, which should be passed on in lower rentals, but any saving may be wiped out if the lessee is partly or fully exempt for VAT purposes. The monthly rentals include a sum reimbursing the lessor for VAT paid on the car's purchase. VAT is then added to the total figure. If the lessee is unable to reclaim the tax it will be hit with double VAT costs. That VAT double whammy,

together with writing-down allowance restrictions, passed on in the form of higher rentals to lessees in contract hire agreements, prompted the development of contract purchase.

Like hire and lease purchase, contract purchase revolves around a loan to the lessee to fund the purchase of a car. However, the lessor offers to repurchase the vehicle for a pre-agreed sum after a pre-arranged period, thereby retaining ownership. The lessee enters into the finance agreement with a supplementary maintenance contract, removing management headaches.

MERYL CUMBER



Making its mark after a dream launch, the Mondeo is on its way to becoming a big player in the upper medium saloon sector

Go where the money is

One of the most profitable and competitive sectors of the market is that covering upper medium saloons. "Upper" refers to price (£12,000-£18,000), "medium" means with an engine capacity of about 2 litres. Buyers are fastidious, and include the most important user-choosers in the business. Higher prices mean, by and large, higher profits, and all the main players take part in the game.

Traditionally the field belonged to Ford and Vauxhall, with the Cortina and Victor, Sierra and Cavalier. Then the demands of the top-grade rep and the superior executive led to the addition of sunroofs, leather upholstery, CD players and air-conditioning, creating the premium (£18,000 to £22,000) end of upper medium saloons. Executives bought Audi 80s, BMW 3-Series and Mercedes-Benz 190s in a category that last year accounted for about

Eric Dymock takes a look at the main players and their challengers in the upper end of the fleet car market.

Will Ford and Vauxhall be able to hold their own?

57,000 of the 400,000 cars sold in the sector as a whole.

As senior executives "downsize" from Jaguars and Rover 800s, to modest 2-litre models with all the trimmings to which they are accustomed, the grouping grows in influence and importance.

The old guard, Ford and Vauxhall, are squaring up to a challenge which looks less discouraging than it did a couple of years ago. The new Mondeo has been getting such rave reviews, and the evergreen Cavalier is still able to give such a good account of itself in a keenly competitive market, that it is the challengers who are under attack. Toyota and Nissan will have their work cut out to catch the frontrunners.

Ford was quick to acknowledge a couple of errors on the introduction of the Mondeo, one technical, the other marketing. The first was put right by raising the overall gearing of the 2-litre model to make it quieter and more restful on the motorway.

The pricing blunder was less easy to remedy. The Mondeo's price, announced at the Geneva motor show, saw a modest increase on the Sierra list price, but a big rise on what the outgoing model was actually selling at because of heavy discounting. Ford justified the price by suggesting that the Mondeo should be compared to a BMW, not a Vauxhall, Nissan or Toyota.

Mondeo gained top marks for style, speed and handling,

It is as smooth and quiet as anything in the class, and the detailing is worthy of a more expensive car. Yet it was not cheap. The Ghia 2-litre cost £18,080 for the five-door, the cheapest in the 16-model range, the 1.6i was £11,580.

Vauxhall cheerfully raised Cavalier prices by nearly 3 per cent, still undercutting Mondeo by £1,000-£1,500. Two weeks after the Mondeo went on sale, Ford reduced dealer margins to 10 per cent, cut the price by 6 per cent to make the Ghia 2-litre £17,450 and so reduced the gap.

Vauxhall has enhanced the Cavalier range with a new V-6, making it smoother and quieter and as fast as BMW, the paragon every manufacturer seems to aim at. The Cavalier was the second-best-selling car on the UK market last year after the Escort. It is well-tailored to the market with good handling and an agreeable appearance, and not due for revision for a full two seasons yet.

Against an establishment such as this, what chance is there for challengers? Rover and Honda are probably not even in the running for the big-fleet market. Honda is well established as a private-buyer car, the Accord coming with a two-year unlimited mileage warranty. Dealer margins are 17 per cent (against Rover's 10 per cent), so there is room for price cuts to come. The joint Rover/Honda operation remains, like Audi, a key player in the premium-fleet market, joining the elite matched against the BMW.

That leaves Peugeot 405, Toyota Carina E and Nissan Primera in the main upper medium category. Peugeot has an advantage in superior diesels (less obtrusive than

either Ford or Vauxhall) and the 405 acquires itself well. Last year's sales in Britain totalled 48,482 against 77,253 Sierras and 108,818 Cavaliers.

The real newcomers are Toyota, with production at Burnaston in Derbyshire building up, and British Nissan. Yet both come to the market with one of their principal advantages all but gone. The reliability of Ford and Vauxhall is now almost a match for the Japanese. European cars have so improved that such differences as remain have little effect on sales.

Accordingly, Toyota's Carina E and Nissan's Primera are judged on their more conspicuous qualities: ride, handling, performance, comfort and style. They are scarcely deficient in any yet, unlike the Mondeo and Cavalier, both are less than memorable.

Japanese 2-litre saloons tend to be bland. Their reliability is taken for granted; they are invariably well equipped but sometimes expensive, and their longevity may be no better than average.

Both makes have three-year, 60,000-mile warranties and six-year anti-perforation guarantees. Surface-treated steel resists rusting, and galvanised steel covers 87 per cent of the Toyota's bodywork. But its interior looks gloomy and cheap, and the Nissan does not have much sense of style. Good detailing remains.

Toyota has developed a lean-burn engine, which mixes more air with the petrol to achieve better economy, but the Carina's ride is not smooth, and its handling does not have the Mondeo's or Cavalier's assurance.

The Primera inherits the old Bluebird's exemplary reliability, with a more supple ride and precise handling from an unusual multi-link front suspension. Its drawbacks are a rather small back seat and an unsightly inside. The plain upholstery is no match for luxurious rivals.

Appealing image, and costs to match

Diesel engines — economical, reliable and thoroughly modern — are giving companies fuel for thought

Diesel-engined cars continue to sell at ever faster rates, with total sales this year forecast by the motor industry pricing bible, *Glass's Guide*, to reach 230,000 compared with last year's total of 200,000, which was the highest achieved by diesel sales in the UK.

If anything, sales of diesels during the first quarter show the *Glass's Guide* forecast might even be on the conservative side. Diesel sales for the first quarter of this year accounted for a record 16.4 per cent of the new car market, with 74,225 sold. That compares with the 46,114 diesel cars sold during the same period last year, which represented 11.35 per cent of the new car market. Sales of diesels to company car fleets now account for 12-13 per cent (and rising) of all company cars being bought, another record achievement.

The March Budget gave company car fleet managers further fuel for thought, because from next April the personal tax liability burden on company cars will be based on a straight 35 per cent of the retail price, thus removing the current engine size element which penalises larger-engined cars. Since diesel cars require larger engines to supply the performance of smaller-engined petrol equivalents, this has worked as a hindrance to company car diesel sales.

With diesels 20-30 per cent more fuel efficient than petrol vehicles, the economic argument for them, particularly for fleet users, is already strong and getting stronger, says Martin Keighley, senior data editor for CAP, Nationwide Motor Research. "Most used diesel cars are worth approximately 15-30 per cent more

than the equivalent petrol engined vehicles of the same age, mileage and condition."

In the past, the fact that diesels were generally noisier and slower made them less attractive to the fleet driver. The introduction of turbo diesels with impressive performance and effective noise and vibration insulation has overcome many old prejudices.

"On balance the diesel-engined car remains, for the present, the better buy overall than a petrol-engined equivalent for average to high-mileage business users. Added to that is the current view that driving diesel is the right



Smart: Citroën ZX Volcano Turbo Diesel

thing to do in the 1990s."

Evidently manufacturers have much to be proud of. Not only are they producing cars far superior to the vehicles that just ten years ago accounted for less than 1 per cent of new UK car sales. They are also successfully shaking off the image of diesels as uncomfortable, unrefined, noisy and smoky. The propaganda war is being won convincingly. Drivers now reckon that environmentally, as well as economically, diesel is the smart way to drive, especially to avoid breaking down.

These are not just words. Figures from ADAC, the German breakdown and recovery organisation, show that diesels are 50 per cent less likely to break down than petrol-driven models.

Citroën's £13,000 ZX is capable of 76.3mpg at a steady 50mph.

For those who really hate filling up, the answer might well be an Audi 100TD, which recently covered an awesome 1,338.1 miles on a single 17.6 gallon tank, at an average of more than 70mpg. Whatever the myths of diesel motoring, the reality is that the Audi is a quiet, sophisticated and prestigious piece of machinery.

For the company-car driver, then, any fears that the undeniable cash advantages of diesel might be outweighed by loss of prestige, driving comfort or performance are more accurately a reflection of the motorist's ignorance than of the reality of diesel driving.

VAUGHAN FREEMAN

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A little car that thinks big

Eric Dymock discovers how
Vauxhall snatched a prize order
from under Rover's nose

Vauxhall's five-year contract to supply the British School of Motoring (BSM) with 50,000 new Corsas is believed to be one of the biggest single-fleet contracts to have been signed in the UK. Peter Batchelor, Vauxhall's executive director of sales and marketing, has good reason to be delighted — the deal is worth £400 million at showroom prices and includes an option extending it for a further five years.

The Corsa 1.2i LS three-door model will be specified for most of BSM's 2,000 franchised driving schools, replacing the familiar red, white and blue Metros.

Ian Coomber, Vauxhall's sales director, won the contract after a year-long campaign. One-off mega-contracts directly between Vauxhall Motors and BSM are exceptional. Mr Coomber has a 60-strong sales force that helps Vauxhall dealers to strike similar deals with firms around the country.



Coomber: targeting decision makers

Fleet sales, according to Mr Coomber, are invariably the result of a lot of chasing and some hard talking. In the case of BSM it began with a cold call. "I was driving to work one day and got stuck in traffic behind a British School of Motoring Metro. There is nothing that says BSM will always drive Metros so I phoned and arranged meetings. I aimed at managing director, decision-making level. We took BSM people to Germany to look at the Corsa before it was announced."

"We included BSM's driving tuition team and its marketing team — BSM has to capture pupils' imaginations and the instructors have to make this car their home throughout the day; they have to live with it and we had to satisfy BSM that they could."

Vauxhall supplies Corsas direct to BSM to be equipped with dual controls. "Of course we were aware of the influence on BSM's pupils. They will clearly be biased towards the car they learn to drive in. We know that 43 per cent of people who pass the test buy cars in the following three months. It is not always a new car but we hope we get them into a Vauxhall dealer."

Vauxhall's usual policy is to channel fleet deals through dealers. "A dealer can see how much business a deal can generate for him and he generally makes the judgment on discounts. He judges the

service potential," Mr Coomber says. "There is no rule book: no scale that says fleets of a certain size qualify for this or that."

"The job of the Vauxhall field force is to deal with the 3,000 to 4,000 major fleets in the country. If there is a bulk purchase in prospect, we try to make sure we get our demonstrators placed in fleets; we make presentations to members of boards or transport managers."

User-chooser fleets provide employees with a list of approved cars and allow them a choice of make and model. "This is more difficult to deal with," Mr Coomber says. "Beyond ensuring that you are presented on the list of 'possibles' there is not a lot you can do to tempt the average user-chooser."

New models are announced to fleets in much the same way as to dealers and to the press. "We hold fleet launch programmes. We do tours of the country to show the car to our

target decision makers, set presentations, and when the prices are announced our field sales team can swing into action."

The biggest fleets belong to the car-hire companies — upwards of 25,000 cars a year — but they scarcely come into the fleet equation. They re-sell cars after a relatively short time. Commercial fleets seldom run to more than 2,000-3,000 cars a year, and a great number have about 400. The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders defines fleets as 25 units or more. These account for 40 per cent of the total car market.

"If you include all business sales to partnerships or single proprietors it comes to around 70 per cent. Fleets of between 25 and 100 cars are the most numerous and they are the most difficult to target. It comes down to dealers working on their own patch whom we help with training courses for their fleet specialists."

The future for the British fleet market looks secure. Mr Coomber believes that the exchequer has gone about as far as it is going to on taxation. The Chancellor indicated as much in the Budget when he said that the company car was now fairly taxed. "He does not want to kill off the company car," Mr Coomber says. "It is too valuable for the industry, and as a tax provider. The general rep is not in much danger although the luxury sector is under threat."



Clinching the deal: Richard Glover, managing director of BSM, left, and Peter Batchelor, from Vauxhall

Flexible friends are into oil

Fuel cards operators are looking
at ways to expand their horizons

The use of plastic cards to buy fuel and goods such as tyres, batteries, exhausts and servicing is now so widespread in the UK that companies specialising in the field are looking to expand internationally.

The card-based systems have grown in particular because they allow management access to detailed information that can identify problem vehicles, and even problem drivers, as well as the cheaper sources of fuel on given routes. Companies switching to the systems can make savings on their fuel costs of at least 5 per cent.

Cards are also being used increasingly to sell diesel fuel through a "bunkering" system. Bunkering is the establishment of a series of fuel stores around the country run either by big companies for their own fleets to use or by independent operators supplying a portfolio of smaller customers. With diesel fuel ever more in demand for fleets, the use of bunkers can cut fuel costs by about 15p a gallon compared with pump prices.

The two biggest operators in the cards-based market are PHH Allstar, whose ultimate parent is America's PHH Corporation, and Vehicle In-

formation Services (VIS), which is best known for two major card brands, Overdrive and Dialcard. Several oil companies run card operations, among them BP, Shell, Esso and Texaco.

David Knight, the managing director of PHH Allstar, has targeted both Germany and France for intensive forays into European markets. The two countries produce different problems. Germany being relatively undeveloped territory as far as the use of plastic cards is concerned. France lies at the other end of the spectrum, described by Mr Knight as "swimming in cards".

In France, PHH Allstar is working with an oil company on a trial system. A recent agreement in Germany will produce a fuel and service network for a number of transport associations provided by PHH Allstar in association with DEKRA, a long-established automotive safety and maintenance group.

In the UK there are probably 5 million cards either in company fleets or run by professionals such as lawyers and engineers. Already there



Knight opportunities on the Continent

are about 1.5 million fuel cards in circulation. PHH Allstar has about 450,000 fuel cards in circulation giving drivers access to a network of more than 12,000 forecourts including all motorway service stations. The Allstar network settles more than £12 million-worth of clients' petrol bills every week.

VIS, which claims about the same size of operation in fuel cards while being smaller in fleet management, is a joint venture involving Evans

Halshaw, a national car sales and garage chain. Its partner is Overdrive Credit Card, part of Harpur UK, a holding company which also has publishing and marketing interests. A year ago VIS acquired Dialcard from Dial Contracts at a time when Dialcard was the third force in fuel cards.

VIS is pursuing growth through expansion of fleet management but it is also seizing opportunities abroad. It runs a card-processing operation for a consortium of five oil companies operating in mainland Europe, including Texaco, Elf and Agip. A similar deal with one oil company has just been signed in the Far East. VIS has also just acquired a fuel-card company in Australia.

More growth in fuel-card business in the UK looks likely in the wake of a Budget which has intensified the need to monitor fuel costs. Tax increases on fuel mean that a company with a car fleet of 500 running on unleaded fuel faces an extra £35,000 a year on its fuel bills.

Mr Johnson believes that the use of electronic data interchange will be employed increasingly to improve efficiency and contain costs.

DEREK HARRIS

Risking life and the limo

Companies drive headlong into oncoming insurance premiums

As a young, high-mileage sales engineer, Michael Turrell might seem a prime candidate for a bad driving record. Instead, he defied the stereotype of the company-car driver by becoming Celine's driver of the year.

Despite their public image, it was the high-mileage business drivers who proved to be the smoothest car handlers of the 2,500 award contestants. They were also top at spotting defects in their vehicles and scored 80 per cent for manoeuvring.

At the John Watson Performance Driving Centre, based at the Silverstone racing track, company drivers are trained to handle their vehicles more safely on special one-day courses.

Tricia Watson, the corporate sales executive at the centre says: "The right attitude to driving is the most important thing we teach. The main fault among drivers is the lack of perception of speed. Many drivers do not have the control over the car that they think they have, so by the end of the day there is a big difference. Those who were overconfident become much more willing to admit that they were not as good as they thought."

Unfortunately many companies have cut back on driver training in a short-term attempt to restrict spending in the recession. The cost benefits of improved driving skills may take years to become apparent, while the cost of a course — about £150 a day per driver — is all too obvious.

Generally, it is companies with a good overall safety record in all aspects of their operations that put the most emphasis on safe driving. Nick Charles, the AA's manager of training operations, says: "The AA has seen a reduction in accidents involving its staff as a result of training. That is proof that training works."

Similarly, the nation's police forces have cut their accident rate from one in 8,000 miles to one in 250,000 miles, despite the

high speeds demanded of drivers. The AA opened its training centre in Nottingham to the public 18 months ago and offers fleet car operators a one-hour assessment for each driver so that each can be allowed the time needed to improve skills. General Accident gives an insurance discount to companies sending drivers on the course; most company-car drivers are bad insurance risks.

Mr Charles says: "I don't know how some companies keep going with the number



Motor skills: driver of the year Michael Turrell

of accidents they have. I visited a company whose 180 cars had been involved in 220 accidents in one year. That is a startling statistic.

"At another company an applicant was not asked for details of his licence despite the fact that his job would involve continual use of a vehicle. Had he required computer skills, almost certainly these would have been checked and additional training implemented."

"The driver, who was expected to pick up six of his workmates on the way to the plant, had picked up two when the vehicle went off the road. The hidden financial costs of this incident are enormous: six key employees not at work, causing production chaos; three in hospital with large medical costs; insurance costs; and production costs."

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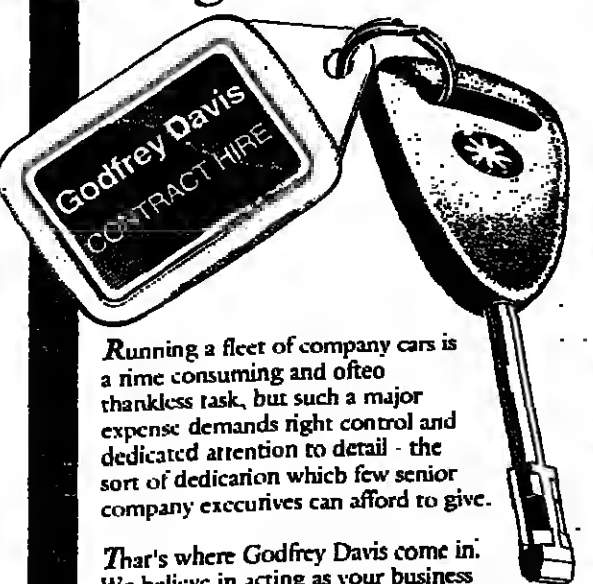
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Company cars often walk before they have been running very long

Wheel clamps are now a sight as common on car and truck fleets incorporated in compounds as they are on the high street during peak shopping hours. But this is not punishment; it is security. Derek Harris writes.

It is clearly not a satisfactory solution. But car alarms are proving insufficient for fleet car needs. Derick Perkins, the director of maintenance control at Fleet Management Services, which specialises in fleet management, says that last year there was a 13 per cent increase in car theft from the fleets in his company's books. "The figures suggest that the majority of cars stolen and not recovered are now stolen to order by professional criminals," Mr Perkins says. "Obviously such people are not dissuaded by alarms."

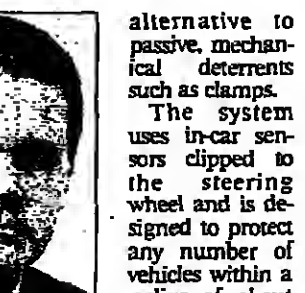
However, he believes that deadlocks can prove effective in preventing theft. Manufacturers are responding to the need. The number of deadlocks fitted as standard is increasing in the volume car

Not quite as safe as houses

market (thanks to Vauxhall) as well as in executive ranges, such as BMW.

Security companies are entering the arena too. Now, from a couple of makers, has emerged an electronically managed sensor and alarm system aimed specifically at car fleet security. One of those behind the new system is Securicor Alarms, part of the Securicor group.

Securicor's system, called Auto-Alert, was originally developed for use on garage forecourts to protect their banks of cars ready for sale. It was seen as a sophisticated



John Deadman: alarm bells ringing

alternative to passive, mechanical deterrents such as clamps. The system uses in-car sensors clipped to the steering wheel and is designed to protect any number of vehicles within a radius of about 400 metres. The sensors are sufficiently sensitive, it is claimed, to be able to distinguish between an accidental knock and criminal tampering. The system initially alerts a control centre and switches on perimeter floodlights. A second interference can activate on-site strobe lights and a siren. A full alarm will bring in floodlights inter-

mittently flashing, plus a warning pre-recorded message pumped out just as an autodialler sends messages from pre-programmed telephone numbers. Most importantly, the system can be linked via video camera to the 24-hour Securicor monitoring system of company premises.

John Deadman, the Securicor Alarms managing director, admits: "You are not going to stop the thief who puts a sledgehammer through a vehicle window and botches it in two minutes. Even so, the deterrent effect of this new system is still huge."

For private company cars, the problem remains. More alarms were fitted to cars last year than ever before, but car theft continues to rise. This raises the question of whether fleet owners should rely not so much on fitting sophisticated alarm systems to cars, but on getting employees to adopt their own precautionary measures, such as removing their radios and parking overnight in garages or areas of low risk.

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In the picture: Cannes, where what is probably Europe's biggest television trade fair, takes place and where lawyers are in demand to give advice as new productions are discussed and deals are often sealed

Today Cannes, tomorrow British television

Over the past few days, the smart place to have been if you are a lawyer involved in the television industry is Cannes. MIP-TV, probably Europe's biggest TV trade fair, is just coming to an end, and producers and broadcasters worldwide have been doing the deals for shows that will end up on British television screens over the next year.

In many cases, the companies will have taken their lawyers with them. MIP-TV may be a little short on the razzmatazz of the Cannes Film Festival, but it is a place where business gets done. And that means heavy negotiation sessions, with lawyers on hand to fine-tune the details so that the media moguls can go away with signed contracts in their briefcases.

Stephen Edwards, a partner in the media and entertainment department of Richards Butler, was in Cannes from Friday to Sunday to act for several production companies from Britain and overseas. In addition to advising his clients, however, he was networking his

way across an industry which is increasingly resembling the film business in its complexity and financing.

Lawyers are fast latching onto these changes. Some of the leading City firms, such as Denton Hall, Richards Butler and Cameron Markby Hewitt, are busily combining their entertainment and banking skills to present a package that comprehensively meets the needs of clients. Smaller law firms, especially the niche television practices, may start to feel the lack of the financial expertise that is now in demand.

The reason for this change is the series of technological and legislative advances which have swept the television industry in recent years. For the UK, of course, the major development was the compulsory opening-up of the BBC to independent producers. However, other initiatives now afoot could see a further transformation of the way the industry works in this country.

Most significantly, perhaps, was the publication of a Monopolies &

Lawyers are increasingly finding that there is money to be made in the south of France. Edward Fennell puts on his smartest sunglasses and slips among the deal-makers



Networking: Stephen Edwards



Introductions: Medwyn Jones



Starring role: Bob Hoskins

Mergers Commission report just before Easter on Channel 3 networking arrangements. The report focused on the extent to which the "competition test" in the Broadcasting Act 1990 is being satisfied.

While lawyers are now arguing about the implications of the report there are many who believe that it will lead to a further liberating of independent producers. Rather than having to sell all their rights in

a production, they may be able to retain some in return for taking part of the financial risk.

If this goes through, banks and funds are likely to become more active in helping finance television

productions that can then be sold to the worldwide market. In other words, they could start to invest in television production in the same way as they already invest in films, although obviously the risk in television productions is lower than in cinema.

Already, law firms are starting to act as match-makers in trying to marry bankers to independent British television producers. In what could turn out to be a landmark event, Cameron Markby Hewitt organised a "production and finance" forum in February, which brought together some of the largest members of Pact, the independent producers association, and City financiers interested in becoming involved in the television industry.

"The aim of the forum was to introduce people with common interests but who do not usually move in the same circles," said Medwyn Jones, a Cameron Markby Hewitt partner.

"For example, independent producers who are normally funded

entirely by Channel 4 or the BBC just wouldn't have had a need in the past to speak very much with City bankers. However, with a new regime coming, they may well want to in the future."

Already one production, *Big Freeze*, with Eric Sykes and Bob Hoskins, has been spawned from a meeting at the forum and Mr Jones is confident that many more will follow it.

The big question now is how far and fast British television producers will become commercialised. Despite the number of production companies now operating, many exist almost as BBC or ITV satellites rather than as truly entrepreneurial businesses.

Lawyers such as Medwyn Jones and Stephen Edwards are helping to change the culture. However, success in converting creative people, reared largely in the corporate broadcasting organisations, to full-blooded business executives may be a slow process.

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The offer of equity partnership is not as unequivocally alluring as it used to be. Too many cautionary tales are now circulating among solicitors about the adverse effect of the recession on equity partners, including those in some of the best-known firms. Partners of large City firms, it is said, are being called upon to make substantial capital contributions. In firms of all sizes, partners are unable to escape their collective liability for heavy costs on half-empty offices. Their earnings in many cases have fallen below those of senior Assistant Solicitors in the same firm. For the first time since the 1930s, the downside of partnership status is as visible as the upside.

Not surprisingly, we now come across partners who are voluntarily abandoning equity partnership status. Financial considerations are not the only reasons. They also wish to return to a purely advisory role where they can get on with the job they were trained to do, free from management responsibilities and the hassle of winning new clients. It would be wrong to suggest, however, that partnership status is no longer appealing. It remains the goal of most solicitors, and to achieve it many are prepared to take an actual cut in their salary. A recent candidate, for instance, earning £60,000 as an Assistant Solicitor moved to a smaller firm offering prospects of partnership and accepted a salary of around £50,000. She was also offered a position in industry at a salary of nearly £70,000, which she declined. The lure of a partnership, or just the prospect of one, can still prove decisive.

Michael Chambers

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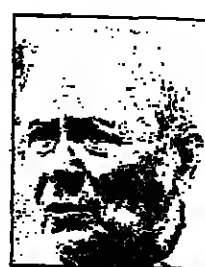
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THEATRE page 42
Elizabeth Bell plays a woman sent to England while her family went to death in the Holocaust

ARTS

ART page 43
Joan Miró: a new foundation in Majorca and a gigantic centenary exhibition in Barcelona



Twin derelicts grandly revived

An 18th-century opera-ballet is bringing new life to an old dance hall, as Richard Morrison writes

I will let you into two secrets. Or rather, City of Birmingham Touring Opera will.

The first is this: deep in the concrete bowels of downtown Birmingham, all but forgotten until a year ago, lies a wonderful performance space. Wonderful, you understand, because of its sheer awfulness. It is burnt-out, vandalised, stripped of all comforts — nothing but a vast derelict shell.

Of course, that very starkness makes the theatrical fancy. Consider how the disused train and tram sheds of London and Glasgow have sent the likes of Peter Brook into transports of delight. But the Roundhouse and Tramway are palaces compared with the Mayfair Suite in Birmingham.

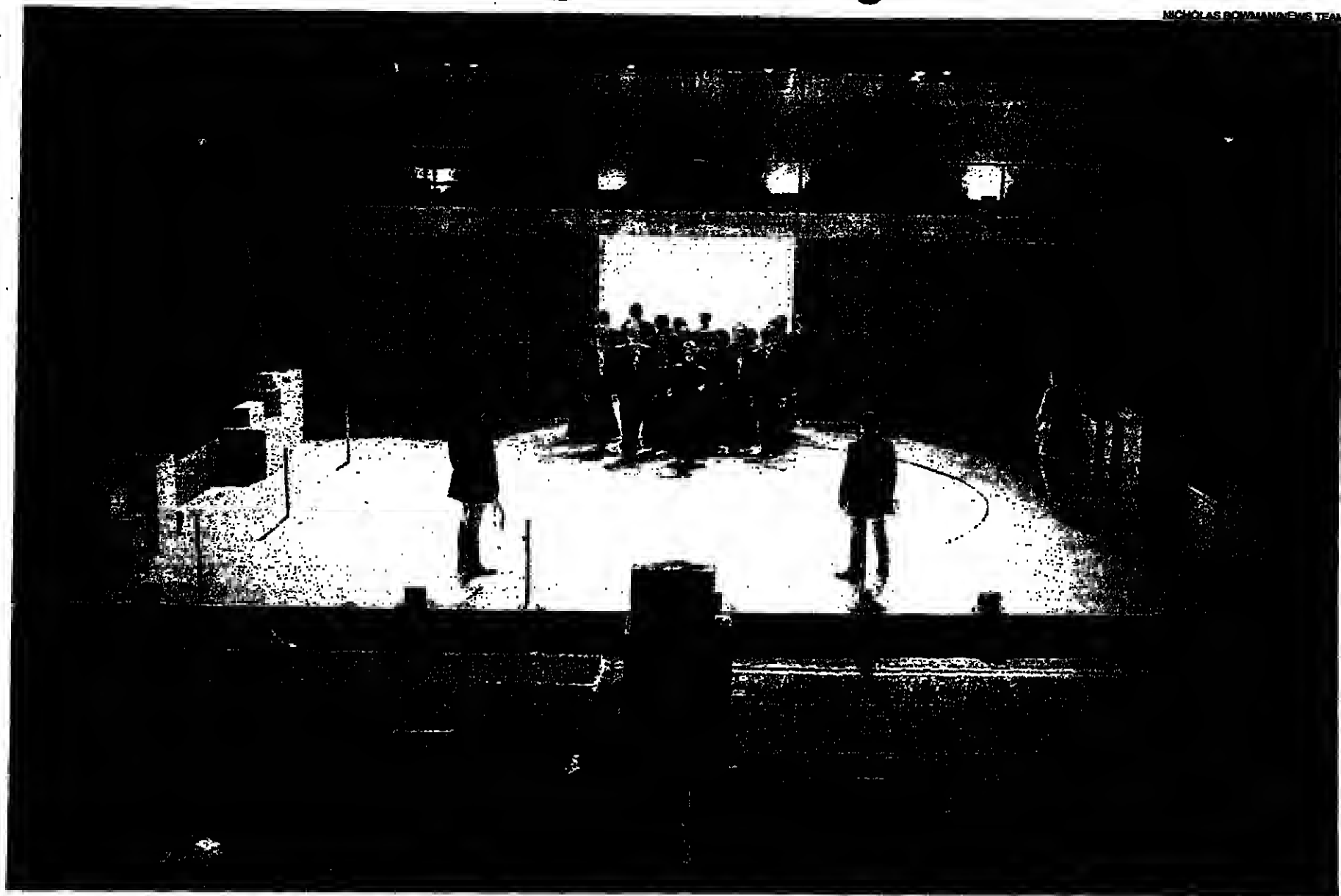
Once, the Mayfair was a ballroom, the best in Brum. Think Joe Loss, think sequins, think cha-cha-chas and the firm's annual dinner-dance. The place had a political history, too. Enoch Powell delivered his "river of blood" speech from the top table in the Mayfair.

But one dark night in 1979 a mysterious fire swept through the ballroom. By then, to be frank, the allure of Joe Loss and sequins was on the wane. The smouldering Mayfair was deemed unnecessary; it was locked up and forgotten. Its "majestic entrance lobby" (I quote a Brummie wearing rose-tinted spectacles) was converted into a shop.

And every day since, thousands have walked through the Bull Ring shopping centre quite unaware of this cavernous space hidden behind an unpromising and unmarked door.

That is the first secret. The second is much older. In 1763 Jean-Philippe Rameau wrote a magnificent opera-ballet, *Les Boréades*. It was the last dramatic work from the 50-year-old French composer, who died the next year. Yet it was never performed, for reasons too murky to be deciphered today.

Was Rameau, a cantankerous genius with few friends, on the wrong end of a political intrigue at the faction-riven French court? It would not have been the first time. Was the allegorical story too hot to handle? After all, those were nervous times for blue-bloods, and in *Les Boréades* the malign "north winds" of the title, which rule the country of Bacaria, are defied in a way that could be interpreted as dangerously subversive. Or did the sheer difficulty of Rameau's musical demands cause cold feet?



Life returns to a burnt-out shell: a rehearsal for the City of Birmingham Touring Opera production of Rameau's *Les Boréades* taking place in the Mayfair Suite

Whatever the reason, the masterpiece lay unperformed for 200 years. John Eliot Gardiner revived it in concert form in the 1970s, and it was staged in France ten years ago. But until this week there has never been a professional British production.

By now you may have deduced the delicious incongruity towards which this article is lurching. Only madmen or geniuses would dream of putting on an unknown 18th-century opera in a burnt-out ballroom in the middle of the Birmingham Bull Ring. Which brings us to City of Birmingham Touring Opera. Its staging of *Les Boréades*, replete with more than 50 singers, dancers and period-instrument players, opens in the Mayfair tomorrow. "We exist to make events happen that nobody else can," says Graham Vick, CBTO's artistic director. "I suppose," he concedes, "that this is an extreme example of that aim."

Vick is a hot property on the jet-set opera circuit, but he never seems happier than when directing his own CBTO. And he has done this sort of inspired lunacy before. After

all, CBTO was the company that "edited" Wagner's *Ring* down to two nights and an orchestra of 20, and toured it round the sports halls of middle England. Whisper it not in Bayreuth, but some Wagnerians preferred it that way.

Vick and his musical director, Simon Halsey, have been talking about doing *Boréades* for six years. "I was keen not to present it in normal theatrical surroundings," says Vick, "partly because the piece is very anarchic. But I was also attracted to the Mayfair because it's a big empty space in the city centre. We perform in city centres when we tour outside Birmingham, but in our home town we often have to go into the suburbs. When we get out into the suburbs, which I can't talk about yet, it will be right in the heart of Birmingham."

One reason why *Boréades* was neglected so long, suggests Halsey, is right. "You open the score, look at all that baroque ornamentation on the first page, and think 'there must be easier things to put on'."

"Yet," points out Vick, "there are

wonderfully hummable tunes in the opera: catchy show-tunes you think you have known all your life. And nothing is allowed to go on too long. It's obviously written for an audience with a short attention span: ideal for today!"

How did CBTO hear about the Mayfair? Richard Cooke provides

'Baroque opera staged in a Sixties ballroom is an unrepeatable offer'

the answer. He is the Bull Ring's manager, a civil engineer who seems agreeably startled to find himself in loco parentis to an opera company. "About this time last year the Birmingham Hippodrome advertised for rehearsal space," he says. "We showed them the Mayfair, which was then very dark, dirty and covered in rubbish. They said no to rehearsals there, but then told me that they were looking for a

derelict building site on which to perform a community opera. The Mayfair was ideal."

After a summer of frantic cleansing, the community opera happened last autumn. The CBTO will be the first professional cast to use it, but later this month Midland Arts Centre is mounting an opera double-bill there, and Cooke has high hopes of putting a "major exhibition" in the Mayfair from July to Christmas, as well as other bookings. "It's ideal for parties and wedding receptions," he says. Optimistic chap, Cooke.

So has Birmingham stumbled upon the performance space of the future? It seems not. The Mayfair may have risen from the ashes, but its after-life is destined to be short. Along with the rest of the Bull Ring, it will be demolished by its owners, London and Edinburgh Trust, in four years' time to make way for a big new development that is promised to be easier on the eye.

Hard to believe that anybody would mourn the passing of this ghastly concrete monster. Yet there

has been a shrill protest campaign, culminating in a recent public enquiry. The result was an unequivocal thumbs-down for the present Bull Ring. "The inspector said quite categorically that he finds the buildings disgusting," says Cooke. "They have passed their sell-by date. Our new plan involves 200 shops, a bus station, offices and a new market. And if we can squeeze the odd theatre in, we will."

That broad hint is good news for CBTO, which has a record of operatic innovation second to none. But I hope that if Vick and company do get a permanent home, they will not give up doing mad things in weird places. Meanwhile, the chance to see a French baroque opera staged in a derelict Sixties ballroom is, as the Bull Ring shopkeepers might say, an unrepeatable offer. Hurry while stocks last.

Les Boréades will be performed tomorrow, Thursday and Saturday at the Mayfair (tickets: 021-236 2392). The production then tours to City Hall, Salisbury (April 27), Warwick University (April 30), Nottingham Playhouse (May 7) and Brighton Festival (May 11, 12).

RADIO House calls

An inflated pig's bladder on a stick, one might think, is a more arresting description of a fellow MP than a shrugged "unfit for office". But Peter Hill, looking back over 15 years of sound broadcasting from the Commons, *Echoes in the Chamber* (Radio 4) and starting yesterday with "Part 1: Oratory and Inevitable", seems to have found David Owen's shrug (directed at defence secretary John Nott) worthy of inclusion, overlooking Labour's Tony Banks and his description of Tory Terry Oicks. I'd have found a place for it — as, indeed, for Dick's tirade against "herbage" as "fat Italians in flights singing with falsetto voices".

I'd have included a working-class rant against the rich from Derbyshire's Dennis Skinner — a bourgeois rant against scoundrels from Hatfield's David Evans, and a militant rant against the whole world from Dave Nellist. But with one minute for each of 15 years, Hill found time for no backbenchers. Still, he dug up some front bench gems. Oratory, to achieve its affect, needs longer bursts than Hill could allow, and only the ancient Michael Foot produced sound bites with a modern dazzle. Far and away the most powerful oratory choice was not oratory at all — Geoffrey Howe, even when resigning, was the antithesis of oratory, yet stunning.

"The task has become futile, of trying to stretch the meaning of words beyond what was credible, trying to pretend there was a common policy when every step forward risked being subverted by some casual comment or impulsive answer."

You could almost hear Mrs Thatcher sucking her teeth. You could almost hear Nigel Lawson grinding his, as Ted Heath amiably remarked "The reason I say he's wise is that he has got himself and the country into a position in which he doesn't know what to do, and has wisely resolved to do nothing." Each of us has our favourites. There are so many: 15 years have raced past since that 1978 broadcasting breakthrough — for radio was the breakthrough: television is the trimmings. Only last week, listening to reactions in the chamber to events in Bosnia, I was struck by the way live broadcasting has become a fact of MPs were now living with. Not just their words but their tones, their facial expressions, would be conveyed to voters — alongside images of the very horrors they were commenting on. When you see that microphone in front of you, and catch the glint of that lens, you just don't say things like "A far-away country of which we know little".

Broadcasting, they say, has brought the Commons Chamber into the nation's sitting rooms. Maybe. But it has also brought the nation's sitting rooms into the Commons Chamber.

MATTHEW PARRIS

Americans are discovering a new Churchill

Holly Hill reports that New York is rising to a British playwright

For three successive seasons, Caryl Churchill has been the most consistently acclaimed and popular foreign playwright Off Broadway. Churchill has had fringe productions which have won awards and moved to runs in larger theatres, and is currently represented by superb new stagings.

The New York Theatre Workshop has mounted two early Churchill works, originally staged at the Royal Court — her first produced play, *Owners* (1972) and *Traps* (1977) — in repertory, with the same company of actors. *Owners* director Mark Wing-Davey won a 1992 Obie Award (the Off-Broadway equivalent of the Tony) for his NYTW staging of *Mad Forest*, which moved to the Manhattan Theatre Club for a run last autumn.

Lisa Peterson, 1991 Obie-winner for her NYTW mounting of *Light Shining in Buckinghamshire*, and at 32 the rising star among American women directors, has staged *Traps*. Both productions are superb.

Churchill may have been writing about London in the Seventies in *Owners*, but 20 years on her story of a greedy female real-estate tycoon is an



Lynn Hawley and Tim Hopper in *Owners*: life-or-death commitment makes their behaviour grimly funny

illustration of *plus ça change*. Americans can easily think of the case of the jailed tax-evading hotel queen Leona Helmsley, as well as Wall Street and banking moguls, to connect immediately with Churchill's characters.

Wing-Davey's production of *Owners* has a dynamo quality perfectly suited to the manic drives of tycoon Marion and the characters who fall into her orbit. On Derek McLane's ingenious set, sides of meat and parts of buildings zing on and off as if obeying the commands of an unseen, irritable construction boss. The actors play with the life-or-death commitment that makes their Ortonesque behaviour grimly funny, and also gives the characters a reality that makes them appear uncomfortably familiar.

By contrast, Peterson has imbued *Traps* with a sense of stillness, a magical evocation of the mixed time scheme of the play. Derek McLane's set is of a huge room with walls that look as if the six members of the commune could afford only one coat of paint.

In the act which is set in the country, crickets chirp and sun streams through tall windows (Christopher Akerlind's lighting is sculpturally powerful in

Out of the sun and into Jutland

MOVE over, Olivier and Mel Gibson. The next screen Hamlet will be Christian Bale, the young British lad who made his debut in Spielberg's film of *Empire of the Sun*. But this Hamlet is different. His name is Amleth, and his doings stem from a chapter of the *Denmark Chronicle*, a 12th-century survey by the historian Saxo Grammaticus. Shakespeare turned the story into his most famous tragedy; now the veteran Danish director Gabriel Axel, best known for his film *Babettes Feast*, is transforming the material into *Prince of Jutland*. Gabriel Byrne has been cast as the equivalent of Claudius; Helen Mirren will take the Gertrude role. Shooting began last week on Danish locations.

Personal pieces

SOME remarkable Impressionist works will be auctioned in June, when a collection going back to the great days of Renoir and Degas is broken up. The collection was formed by the Durand-Ruel family, the Paris dealers. Paul Durand-Ruel met Monet and Pissarro in London in 1870, and soon became friend and dealer to most of the Impressionists.

The Sotheby's sale in London on June 22 and 23 will include several Renoir portraits, including an exquisite *Young Woman in a Black Hat*, and a pastel of Paul's grand-daughter Marie-Louise when she was a baby. There is also a fan-shaped gouache on silk, *Siesta in the Field*, painted

ARTS BRIEFING

ed by Pissarro as a wedding present for Paul's daughter, Jeanne. Drawings by Monet and Degas are also in the sale.

● THE actress Billie Whitelaw is to become Reading University's first Ammenberg Beckett fellow. The chair is appropriate: Reading is home to the Beckett International Foundation which looks after many of Samuel Beckett's original manuscripts, while Whitelaw had a long association with the playwright. Footfalls was written for her in 1976.

She will be in residence at Reading for a week from May 3, running workshops and performing a one-woman show, *An Informal Evening with Samuel Beckett*.

Last chance...

STING returns to the Albert Hall, London (071-589 8212) tomorrow and Thursday to play the shows which were postponed when he contracted laryngitis last month. Sales of his new album, *Ten Summoners' Tales*, are already proving much stronger than those of its gloomy predecessor, *The Soul Cages*, and this latest show reflects Sting's more buoyant frame of mind — featuring most of the new songs, old favourites and a couple of Beatles covers.

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NADINE MEISNER

Shadow of Hong Kong looms large on world stage



Harriman: maturity

Mansell cautious as countdown begins to ultimate challenge

FROM OLIVER HOLT IN LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

WITH a shrug of the shoulders and a few reflections about the inestimable value of the 15 championship points he gained here today, Nigel Mansell forgot about Sunday's self-styled grand prix and looked ahead with trepidation to the "one million days of May".

The phrase is not his. It was coined by the hyperactive Newman-Haas public relations officer, Michael Knight, to describe the laborious business of qualifying for and taking part in the showpieces of the IndyCar series, the Indianapolis 500, and to sum up the accumulation of tension that rises in teams and drivers.

At Unser Jr appears to be looking forward to the race with a little more relish. Last year's winner, he was forced to retire from Sunday's contest here after Mansell appeared to squeeze him into the wall as Unser tried to overtake him on the 54th lap.

"I've never seen anybody block me as bad as Nigel blocked me today," Unser said. "He parked me against the wall, but what goes around comes around."

Mansell, whose third place behind the young Canadian, Paul Tracy, and the reigning IndyCar champion, Bobby Rahal, restored him to the lead in the championship, refused to rise to the implied threat. "He went for a make-or-buy manoeuvre and he went bust," he said.

By that stage, Mansell's thoughts were clearly leaping forward towards Indianapolis, the famous "Brickyard" stadium he has never seen and the endless hype that accompanies the build-up.

Before he lines up for the race, run around a 2.5-mile oval, the reigning Formula One world champion will have to undergo a three-day "rookie orientation" test, then brace himself for a drawn-out round of practice and qualifying before race day, May 30.

Mansell is still chastened by his first competitive experience on an oval, when he slammed his car backwards into a concrete wall during practice at Phoenix a fortnight ago.

His third place on Sunday, achieved in the face of mechanical problems and the lingering effects of the crash,

has not erased his memories of the accident or undone the lessons he learnt. "I have to educate myself before and during the build-up to Indianapolis," he said yesterday. "I want to do a quiet, solid job and not to set the world alight. I will not run flat out until I have to."

The requirement to take part in the rookie test, which involves running a series of laps at given speeds well below those Mansell is capable of and even sitting in a classroom to be taught the traditions of the race, used to irk another former British Formula One world champion and Indianapolis winner, the late Jim Clark. But Mansell said: "It will be hard for me to stifle my competitive instincts, but if that is the rule, so be it. Anyway, when you have backed your car into a wall at 185 mph, it changes your view of things."

With Tracy emerging as the most serious threat to Mansell's attempt at becoming the first Briton to claim titles in Formula One and IndyCar, Mansell the Englishman may have to reassess his attitude to ovals. Tracy, who drives for the formidable Penske team, is skilled on both oval and street circuits, and Mansell may not be able to rely on picking up maximum points on the roads and consolidating his lead in the six races run on ovals.

Whether a second world sevens will be played has yet to be decided: the IRFB agreed to only one tournament, though accepting the principle of a four-year event interspersed with the World Cup proper. When the board holds its interim meeting in November and can study the returns from Edinburgh it is likely to decide that Hong Kong in 1997 will be the place for England, the country that has never sent a national team to the Hong Kong sevens, to defend the Melrose Cup.

The shadow of the Hong Kong tournament loomed large at Murrayfield. Joe Sawahin, the Fiji manager, accused the RWC organisers of learning too little from the world's premier sevens tournament which his team has become so accustomed — too accustomed? — to winning. David Campese, who says he will not play sevens again ("I'm getting too old to turn and chase with all the

David Hands looks back on a Rugby World Cup Sevens tournament that was a triumph for the players and reflected the game's growing pains

young guys coming after me" believes it to be the natural venue for a world tournament. Bob Dwyer, Australia's coach, rated the WRC sevens a harder tournament, but that was partly because of regulations that made it so. Scotland's organisers did a marvellous job in ensuring the tournament ran to time (occasionally in front of it), although the risk of injury to players may have been increased thereby. The teams, too, seemed uniformly happy with the arrangements made for them — happier, at any rate, than the paying public, who had to contend not only with the weather but limited refreshment facilities and, on the final day, hugely over-priced tickets and

limited access to information on how to obtain them. A regular complaint was the absence of publicity for the tournament.

What of the play? In domestic terms, even had England not made such a phenomenal success of their scratch VII, Ireland would have felt the void left by the sad demise of Scotland and Wales. "There is no mystery about sevens," Noel Murphy, Ireland's manager, said. "It's down to working for each other and the ability to keep going."

"This tournament improved our handling. It showed our players we could live with the best and we have benefited from the exposure. If we were picking a Lions VII we

might get more than two players in it." Murphy's gentle dig at the Lions selectors underlined how Ireland's season has been reversed and the pleasure that has brought to folk at home.

Andrew Harriman, England's articulate captain, believed South Africa to be the best VII his team played. Harriman himself, relegated to the role of "sevens expert" prematurely after his solitary cap in 1988, led England with maturity, skill and personal example. It was Campese who, on Saturday night, wrote off Harriman's defensive skills; it was Harriman on Sunday whose tackles denied, among others, Dick Muir, of South Africa, when it was most needed, a thunderous effort equalled by David Scully, the Wakefield scrum half, to halt Mesake Rasari in his tracks and stem the Fijian tide in the semi-final.

Scully's effort won him the award yesterday of the finest

moment of the tournament from Famous Grouse, the main sponsoring company whose support for rugby will extend to the 1995 World Cup. Harriman's opening try of the final against Australia was rated the best of the tournament, while Ireland, fittingly, were named the best unseeded team after their achievement of reaching the semi-finals.

The sadness is that these England players who have shared so much will not do so again unless they can reform unofficially for a tournament such as the Punta del Este Sevens in Uruguay, next January. The organisers, the British Schools Old Boys Club of Montevideo, are desperately keen to attract good players from England to their exotic location. But such as Nick Beal, Lawrence Dalaglio and Matt Dawson have discovered a lot about themselves they did not know; they will be better players for it.



California war: Nigel Mansell after Sunday's race at Long Beach with Paul Tracy, the winner, left, and Bobby Rahal, the runner-up

FOOTBALL

NEVILLE OWEN'S COMBINATION: First division: Luton 1, Chelsea 1; Millwall 1, Charlton 1; Wimbledon 1, Ipswich 1; Second division: Torquay 3, Cardiff 0.

WORLD CUP: Concacaf zone: Third round: Canada 3, Honduras 1; Mexico 3, El Salvador 1.

BORD GAIS LEAGUE OF IRELAND: Play-off: First leg: Waterford 2, Monaghan 2; Kilmacallagh 2, Wexford 2.

PORTUGUESE LEAGUE: Sporting 5, Chelsea 0.

BRAGANCA LEAGUE: Rio de Janeiro: Fluminense 2, Botafogo 0; Flamengo 2, Palmeiras 0; Olaria 0, Vasco 0.

POOLS FORECAST

TEAMS at or near the foot of the table often, out of sheer desperation, upset the form book towards the end of the season. The third division clubs, Halifax Town and Torquay United, did so on Saturday with away victories over Bury and Shrewsbury Town respectively. This week, Northampton Town can do almost as well by drawing at Doncaster Rovers. Halifax, Torquay and Northampton are all in danger of going out of the Bardsley League.

Wycombe Wanderers, having made certain of a Bardsley League place next season, despite losing to Altrincham on Saturday, may take their foot off the pedal in their remaining fixtures, and that will give Torquay United the chance to draw with them.

With no Premier League matches, punters have another opportunity to show their non-League expertise. There are 18 such fixtures on the calendar this week. Other confident, treble-chance choices in this section are Altrincham v Bromsgrove Rovers and Welling United v Glastonbury.

Watford's erratic home form should encourage Brentford to salvage a point in their struggle to remain in the first division. Deadlock is also likely at Fulham, who are hosts to Burnley in a mid-table second division encounter.

BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Montreal Expos 4, Cleveland Indians 2; Chicago Cubs 10, Philadelphia Phillies 11; St. Louis Cardinals 5, New York Mets 3; Toronto Blue Jays 5, Detroit Tigers 4; Oakland Athletics 4, Kansas City Royals 3.

AMERICAN LEAGUE: Sunday: Boston Red Sox 4, Chicago White Sox 2; Texas Rangers 12, New York Yankees 2; Baltimore Orioles 4, California Angels 3; Cleveland Indians 4, Toronto Blue Jays 5; Detroit Tigers 4, Oakland Athletics 4; Kansas City Royals 3, Minnesota Twins 4.

WEST DIVISION: Boston Red Sox 4, Chicago White Sox 2; Texas Rangers 12, New York Yankees 2; Baltimore Orioles 4, California Angels 3; Cleveland Indians 4, Toronto Blue Jays 5; Detroit Tigers 4, Oakland Athletics 4; Kansas City Royals 3, Minnesota Twins 4.

EAST DIVISION: Philadelphia Phillies 9, St. Louis Cardinals 7; New York Mets 6, Montreal Expos 3; Florida Marlins 4, Chicago Cubs 3.

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NATIONAL LEAGUE: Montreal Expos 4, Cleveland Indians 2; Chicago Cubs 10, Philadelphia Phillies 11; St. Louis Cardinals 5, New York Mets 3; Toronto Blue Jays 5, Detroit Tigers 4; Oakland Athletics 4, Kansas City Royals 3.

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Botham's great adventure reaches final instalment

If anything can even now revitalise the dying embers of Ian Botham's cricket career, it will be the arrival in London next Sunday of this summer's Australian touring team. Red rag to the aging bull.

Retirement may be in the mind, but where Botham and the Australians are concerned, the heart has always ruled the head. Missing the Ashes, to a man who has come as close as anyone to claiming them for his own, would be like having the door slammed in his face at the best party of the year.

There is no reason to doubt that this will be Botham's final year and that he will wish to mark it with something special. In his last match yesterday, he mentioned winning a trophy for Durham and another cap for England

in an Ashes series. It is hard to know which is the longer shot but, with this man, nothing can be ruled out.

Durham's treasurer will be delighted by the news. Early warning of the imminent retirement ensures increased crowds, everyone anxious to catch their own last memories of a legend. The fixture-list has been kind, too, for Durham's last match this summer is against Somerset, with whom Botham spent the best 13 years of his career. Make a note of it now — September 16, but in the prosaic setting of Hartslepool, not Taunton, the scene of many of his triumphs.

So, having given a substantial boost to the new county's first season simply by his coming, Botham will enliven their second with his going. It might almost have been

Alan Lee looks back over a cricketing career that will never be forgotten by a generation of followers in England and Australia

planned, and perhaps, by some in the Durham camp, it was. Not by Botham, though, for until now he has never admitted to even the possibility that his limbs might betray him before he was ready.

Even now, he is nothing if not self-confident. His answer to the question of why he should be chosen for England has always been: "Why not? Who is better than me?"

His jaw-jutting cockiness set him apart, and it has not diminished. He is as confident as ever that he could still do an all-round job against the Australians this summer and,

such is his aura and his record, you can rest assured that Allan Border hopes that he is not given the chance.

Border and Botham go back a long way, to the 1978-9 series, when both were young thrusters making their way. By 1981, Botham was captain of England, a misguided appointment which gave him his only failure as an England player but which also produced the most remarkable series of recent memory.

In the third Test at Headingley, freed from the constraints of a job which ill-suited him, Botham played the

barely believable innings that transformed the series. At 135 for seven in their second innings, England were still 92 runs behind Australia and on the brink of going 2-0 down in the series. Botham thought otherwise. With trenchant support from Dilley, Old and Willis, he steered England to 356 all out, his own contribution 149 not out. Willis, eyes glazed in trance, had been given the smallest of openings and through it he bowled England to victory by 18 runs. A nation rejoiced.

Two weeks later, Botham did the bowling himself and took five wickets for one run to confound the Australians again, this time at Edgbaston. Then, at Old Trafford, he was to bat even better than he had done at Leeds and, although Border, now a close friend,

matched him with a doughty century of his own, England won again. The Ashes were safe.

Botham and Border have crossed swords many times since and, in the late 1980s, they even spent two winters together in the Queensland team, a venture which ended with such a bizarre, mid-air argument between them that Botham ended up in court.

Their friendship was temporarily suspended, but relations are now restored. In the improbable event that the England selectors give Botham his opportunity, he and Border will doubtless drink a toast to mutual retirement some time this summer. If not, they will undoubtedly do it somewhere else, adding to that toast a stinging denunciation of selectors everywhere.



In his pomp: Botham during the 1981 series

Pakistan will struggle to get back on terms

FROM JOHN WOODCOCK IN PORT-OF-SPAIN

PAKISTAN are fortunate to have in Mudassar Nazar a cricketer manager who talks a good deal of sense. He was not looking for excuses yesterday, to account for Pakistan's heavy defeat in the first Test match, other than to say that because of the surfeit of one-day cricket his side have had to play in recent months they are not what he calls "Test fit".

While West Indies have had a hard Test series in Australia this winter, Pakistan's only Test match since last August was against New Zealand on a poor pitch at Hamilton. Most of Pakistan's time has been taken up with one-day internationals. But if this was to the advantage of the West Indians, Mudassar felt the pitch for the Test match here, however unsatisfactory, should have favoured Pakistan.

Mudassar complimented the West Indians on their professionalism, though he considers them to be nothing like as good a side as they were, say, ten years ago, when their bowling was a lot more penetrative.

It has obviously been an unusually dry "dry season" in Trinidad, but that is not a good enough excuse for providing a Test pitch that very soon had holes in it. It was the same for both sides, though, and as happens when the ball deviates so much (eg, Headingley and Melbourne) it made for consistently eventful cricket, in which short-pitched bowling brought no rewards. Of the 40 wickets to fall, 17 were leg-before, seven caught at slip and five behind the wicket, all off balls that moved around and were well pitched up.

At 100 for two on the first evening, in reply to West Indies' first innings of 127, Pakistan were in a position to take control of the match. From then until the second evening, when Pakistan had been bowled out for 140 and West Indies were 333 for

three in their second innings, the gusto and skill with which West Indies caught, bowled and batted were irresistible.

It will be very difficult now for Pakistan to get back into the series. Wasim bowled superbly on Sunday morning when finishing off West Indies' second innings, and Sohail and Mujtaba showed themselves to be fighters, and Basit Ali's 37 on the last day was full of promise. But that was about all. Javed is not the player he was, Mushtaq Ahmed was a forlorn figure, and Moin Khan's wicketkeeping was gruesome. As for Waqar, for him to bowl only four of the first 32 overs in West Indies' second innings was a case not of tampering with the ball, of which there was clearly none, but of tampering with sanity.

Mushtaq has been ruled out of the second Test match, which starts in Bridgetown, Barbados on Friday. He may be down to England this week for another opinion on the injury to his back, and Somerset have every reason to be concerned about their investment in him. Their best, perhaps most valid, hope must be that if, and when, he sees English batsmen at the striker's end, it will prove the miracle cure.

WEST INDIES: First innings: 127. Second: 333. **PAKISTAN:** First innings: 140. Second: 177.

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High flyer: Martin, of Lancashire, bowls a fiery delivery at The Parks yesterday

DeFreitas back in style after winter of discontent

By IVO TENNANT

THE PARKS (second day of three): Lancashire, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, are 160 runs ahead of Oxford University

NO CRICKETER will concern himself less with the arguments against the two ancient universities retaining their first-class status than Phillip DeFreitas. His two

wickets yesterday were, extraordinarily, his first in anything other than the one-day game since last September.

It says too much about England's tour of India. Here, though, he looked the consummate fast bowler, weight shed through sessions in the gym, groin strain overcome and making the batsman hurry his shot even on an early-season pitch. In short, he was a different performer.

Neither did Oxford succumb lightly, even if their captain, Gallian, did not bat because of a broken thumb. Later, he took both Lancashire wickets to fall. Montgomery and MacMillan took them to 97 for one before three wickets fell in seven balls. Montgomery batted for two-and-a-half hours and eventually went to a catch at third slip off a tentative prod.

SCOREBOARD

LANCASHIRE: First innings: 308 for 4 dnc. **OXFORD UNIVERSITY:** First innings: 95.

LANCASHIRE: First innings: 308 for 4 dnc. **OXFORD UNIVERSITY:** First innings: 95.

Martin's triumph does little for the cause

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

EAMONN Martin's victory in the London Marathon on Sunday gave the shop window of British distance running a tailored look, but take off the jacket and the mannequin looks dishevelled. Compared with the sprinters, Britain's distance runners are treated like tramps.

Since Martin will be running only commercial marathons in the foreseeable future, concentrating on the track for the international championships, there seems little prospect of Britain producing a world, European or Commonwealth champion. Most of Britain's best marathon runners took part in London, but with the exception of Martin

and Dave Buzza in sixth place, they ran disappointingly.

Britain might as well give up now the World Cup it holds for marathon running. Won in London two years ago, it needs to be defended in San Sebastian six months hence, but who is there to pick? Chris Brasher, the London Marathon founder, and his new champion took aim at the British Athletic Federation (BAF) yesterday and blamed it for the sorry state.

While Martin said the BAF's reluctance to stage international quality 10,000 metres races was in part responsible, Brasher disclosed that an offer made ten months ago by the London Marathon

to help pay for a national distance running squad for 5,000 metres and upwards had not yet been replied to.

Then, criticising BAF's road running chairman, Alan Warner, he added: "I was hoping to discuss it with the chairman of the road running commission of the BAF this weekend, but he is in Boston [for the marathon]."

Brasher has written to the federation again, suggesting they go 50-50 on backing the squad to some £30,000. "We have got to get morale up; we have got to get some spirit," Brasher said. It was unreasonable, he argued, that the BAF takes in excess of £100,000 a year from levies on road race

entry fees but pays scant regard to dressing the shop window. He had, he said, "the formidable 15", comprising Britain's best marathon runners, ready to help.

Dave Long, who led Britain to its World Cup victory, offered a constructive thought, rightly describing the World Cup race as the equivalent of a football B international. "It is the next stage between running for Britain for the first time and a major championship; it should be used as a stepping stone for runners who are inexperienced," he said.

Field to expand, page 22
Results, page 22-23

Eight nations enter for Admiral's Cup series

EIGHT nations from as far afield as Australia and Japan are sending yachts to Cowes at the end of July to compete in this year's Champagne Muntz Admiral's Cup series (Barry Pickthall writes).

A record 19 teams graced the Solent in the Eighties but the fact that two other countries are still hoping to put teams together before the deadline on July 5 suggests that the tide of interest in offshore racing is on the turn.

At the last event two years ago just seven nations participated, and earlier this year it looked doubtful whether even Britain would be able to muster two boats this year.

However, a spokesman from the Royal Ocean Racing Club confirmed that the Union Jack would be flying, along with the flags from Australia, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Ireland and Japan.

After two days of racing on the final stage of the British Steel Challenge from Cape Town back to Southampton, ten miles divided the top five boats as the lead swapped between Group 4 Securities and Nuclear Electric.

LEADING POSITIONS (at 15.00 GMT yesterday with miles to Southampton): 1. Nuclear Electric (J. Chisholm), 5.50; 2. Group 4 Securities (J. Goring), 5.57; 3. Cornhill (J. M. M. M.), 5.58; 4. P. de T. (J. M. M. M.), 5.59; 5. Group 4 Securities (J. Goring), 5.60.

Dorahy inherits Monie's legacy

WHEN John Monie succeeded Jack Gibson at the Sydney rugby league club, Parramatta, he was likened to the batsman who had to follow Bradman (Christopher Irvine writes). Now John Dorahy, a surprise appointment yesterday as the new coach of Wigan, has the unenviable task of trying to emulate Monie's four glorious years at Central Park. Dorahy, 38, a fellow Australian, who struggled in his coaching baptism at Halifax three years ago, was the apparent first choice of the club. He comes with an extraordinary legacy and a record unlikely to be improved.

Like Monie, Dorahy, a former Australian full back, who is assistant coach of the Wigan Cup side, Newcastle Knights, is a studied thinker. Nevertheless, Dorahy, who has signed a three-year deal, is still learning his trade and is something of a gamble. "Coming in after John Monie, he's bound to have some trepidation," Jack Robinson, the Wigan chairman, said. "But we've chosen him because he is his own man, with new ideas relevant to a club always straining to improve."

Wheelchairs on trial

BOWLS: After watching a demonstration of a custom-built bowls buggy at Worthing's Beach House Park, the competitions committee of the English Bowling Association has decided to open its national championships to players in wheelchairs for a two-year trial. Tony Patching, Worthing's head greenkeeper, was impressed, not only with the way the two wheelchair internationals, Mervyn Vicary and Ian Blackmore, played against the England president, Roy Peacock, and the treasurer, Bob Jack, but also with the buggy. "This chair exceeded all my expectations," Patching said. "The greens this time of year are soft, but the buggy had no effect on the rink whatsoever. I would say it had less impact on the grass than the feet of an able-bodied person."

Spanish ease through

TENNIS: Andrei Chesnokov and Sergi Bruguera had straight-sets victories yesterday on the opening day of the Monte Carlo Open. Chesnokov, from Russia, who won the tournament three years ago but is unseeded this year, made short work of beating Luis Matos, from Brazil, 6-0, 6-4, while Bruguera, who beat Boris Becker in the 1991 final, came through a tough first-round match against Renato Furlan, of Italy, with a 6-4, 6-4 win. Five Spaniards won on the first day, Bruguera following Carlos Costa, Emilio Sanchez, Francisco Clavet and Alex Corretja into the second round. Arnaud Boetsch, of France, was the first seed to lose, beaten 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 by Marcelo Filippini, of Uruguay.

Matete suspended

ATHLETICS: Samuel Matete, 24, the world 400 metres hurdles champion, has been barred from international events by the Zambian Amateur Athletic Association for allegedly receiving illegal payments from international meetings, according to a report in Zambia. However, the International Amateur Athletic Federation said yesterday that all money earned by Matete on the grand prix circuit had been forwarded to the Zambian association and that it knew of no alleged illegalities. Matete became Zambia's first world champion when he won the title in 1991.

Wade Knutson, a university student at Sioux City, Iowa, has died from injuries incurred when he missed the pole vault landing pad during a decathlon on Saturday.

Edward Nicholson

RIFLE SHOOTING: Major Edward Nicholson, late Royal Signals and one of the outstanding characters in rifle shooting, has died aged 78. Nicholson had shot in the final of the King's or Queen's Prize, the premier Commonwealth contest, 24 times — more than any shooter still living — competing for the last time at the age of 74 in 1988. He shot for England in the home countries national match 23 times and was captain in 1968. He was in four Great Britain touring teams, captain of the team to Canada in 1973, and several times shot or coached in the Empire and Kolapore matches. Nicholson helped build the Cheshire Rifle Association to senior county status.



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All-rounder seeks final Test against Australia before retiring

Botham ready
to declare
innings closedBy ALAN LEE
CRICKET
CORRESPONDENT

IAN Botham, the most famous cricketer of his generation, yesterday announced he would probably retire at the end of the season but, in a typical show of bravado, said he still hoped to play for England against Australia this summer.

"In all probability this will be my last season," he said. "But I want to get through this year and do well enough to have another crack at the Aussies. I played last year, why shouldn't I play now? England have not exactly filled themselves with honours this winter."

It is, of course, a flight of fancy, but then that could be said about the whole of Botham's career, which he began as a tousle-haired teenager on the MCC groundstaff and continued via Somerset and Worcestershire to Durham. It is no great surprise that the end is near.

Botham's two-year contract with Durham ends in September and, like several others at the fledgling county, he is not guaranteed another. He will be 38 in November, but it is not so much the years but the mileage that has aged him. Few lives have been lived at such a punishing pace, and wear and tear have long since been evident.

In January, Botham underwent surgery on his right shoulder. It was the tenth operation he has had in order to continue playing cricket.

"I have had more injuries in the last three years than in all the rest of my career," he said. "There comes a point when you say hang on, what are you doing to yourself?"

For Botham, that point has arrived. For others, concerned on his behalf, it arrived one, two or even three years ago, as injuries became a disruptive habit and the performances which were once routinely stunning gradually became simply routine.

The last of his 102 Test matches was played last June, against Pakistan. Fittingly, it was at Lord's, but the heroics were absent. Botham scored two and six, bowled five overs and, despite two catches, fielded at slip like a man whose once infallible eye-to-hand coordination had abandoned him.

Yet another injury ensured that he could not be considered for the next game. It surely saved him from being dropped. It was clear he had

FACTFILE

Born: Heswall, Cheshire, November 24, 1955.
County career: Somerset 1974-86 (capt 1978, captain 1984-85), Worcestershire 1987-91 (capt 1987), Durham 1992-3 (capt 1992).
Test matches: 102 (1977-92), 12 as captain (1980-1).
One-day internationals: 116.
1,000 runs in a season: 4 (best: 1,530, 1985).
100 wickets in a season: 1 (1978).
50 wickets in a season: 7.
Best bowling: 8-34, England v Pakistan, Lord's, 1978.
Best batting: 228, Somerset v Gloucestershire, Taunton, 1980.
Honours: County championship, 1988, 1989; Gillette Cup/NatWest Trophy, 1979, 1983; Benson and Hedges Cup, 1981, 1982; John Player/Reliance Assurance League, 1979, 1987, 1988; BBC sports personality, 1981; OBE 1992.
Career record: All first-class matches: 18,963 runs (37 centuries, avg 34.20), 1,159 wickets (avg 27.08), 346 catches. Test matches: 5,200 runs (14 centuries, 22 half-centuries, avg 33.54), 383 wickets (27 five-wicket innings, 4 ten-wicket matches, avg 28.40), 120 catches.

come a Test too far. Botham can still bat. When the mood is up, he can even now destroy bowling of quality. But these are fleeting moments, for the technique, which has always been more classical than many would credit, is no longer supported by the instinct and incentive. He has done it all, long ago, and Mondays at Middlesbrough fail to inspire him.

As his shoulder and back have troubled him, so Botham's bowling has lost its threat. The pace dropped some years ago and now, his movement limited, he can no longer swing the ball late as he once did to such effect. Last summer, he took only 24 championship wickets for Durham, at a cost of 42 each.

His only century for his third county came, characteristically, on his debut. But he was not regarded as a failure nor, as some feared, as a prima donna, and Geoff Cook, Durham's director of cricket, was speaking only half in jest when he said yesterday: "If he gets 50 wickets and 1,000 runs this summer, I'm sure he will be keen to keep playing."

Botham, however, gives the impression that his mind is made up. A country sportsman by nature, he loves to shoot and fish in Scotland.

His social excesses may have been tamed, but he still loves to drink with the best of them and, having raised more than a million pounds for leukemia research, his big heart and appetite for fresh challenge remain as strong as ever.

Cricket no longer dominates him and if one factor has brought about yesterday's confession, it is the realisation that his remaining ambition is beyond him. Liam, his son, is 16 and on the verge of breaking into county cricket.

"I always wanted to play in the same team as him," Botham said yesterday. "But I can't hang around that long."

Sir Richard Hadlee, the leading wicket-taker in Test match history, will make an unexpected comeback on Saturday when appearing for Leyland in a Northern League match at Lancaster. Hadlee, who underwent a heart bypass operation two years ago, will deputise for Gordon Greenidge.

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The back of Botham: the all-rounder makes his announcement yesterday

McManus
keeps
nerve to
see off
teenager

By PHIL YATES

ALAN McManus showed his unflappable temperament again to overcome the gallant 17-year-old, Ronnie O'Sullivan, in the first round of the Embassy world snooker championship at The Crucible Theatre, Sheffield, yesterday.

McManus has reached the semi-finals of six tournaments this season and the final of three others but O'Sullivan, the 1991 world junior champion at the age of 15, won three of the opening four frames in the second session to level at 7-7.

"It was then that I told myself to calm down and dig my heels in," McManus said. In the next three frames, he mixed decisive breaks of 40, 63 and 63 with watertight safety to deny O'Sullivan any opportunities.

McManus, who beat John Parrott, the champion in 1991, 13-12 on the way to reaching the semi-finals last year, will need a similar degree of composure and resolution in the next round if Steve Davis emerges victorious from his opening match against Peter Ebdon tomorrow.

O'Sullivan said: "This match has made me realise what I've got to do. I know I've got the talent but these players are on a different planet. When they get under pressure, they get stronger."

As expected, Nigel Bond, the world No. 9, proved too strong for Spencer Dunn, the rank outsider, as he reached the last 16 of the championship for the first time by converting a 6-3 overnight lead into a 10-4 victory.

Breaks of 49, 83, 34 and 39 in the first session showed that Dunn, a first-season professional, has improved greatly but Bond, the winner of the King's Cup in Thailand in December, comfortably advanced by winning four of the five frames when play resumed yesterday.

Dennis Taylor, who needed to win his opening match against Tony Drago, of Malta, to retain hope of safeguarding his unique, unbroken membership of the world's top 16, led 5-4 going into last night's concluding session.

RESULTS: First round: N Bond (Eng) bt S Dunn (Eng), 10-4; A McManus (Scot) bt R O'Sullivan (Eng), 10-7. Latest scores: O Taylor (N Ire) leads A Drago (Malta), 5-4.

RESULTS: Women: Final: M Martin (Aus) bt S Horner (Eng), 9-7, 9-0, 8-4.

Martin
makes
light of
home
threat

By COLIN MCQUILLAN

MICHELLE Martin, the world No. 1 from Australia, defeated Suzanne Horner, from Yorkshire, 9-7, 9-0, 8-4 in 39 minutes in the final of the Hi-Tec British Open squash championship at Wembley last night.

Martin was in command after an opening game that lasted 17 minutes, which Horner lost when she drove cross court onto her opponent's racket at 8-7 when a simple backhand drop shot would have taken her into a tie-break. The second game lasted just five minutes and went to Martin 9-0 in a single hand. Horner put up a brief fight to 4-4 in the third.

Martin, 25, is Sydney based and the younger sister of the previously more famous Martin brothers. She is one of a group of young players who came out of the Australian Institute of Squash five years ago to revolutionise the women's game, both in style and technique.

She takes the British Open title to Australia for the first time since Vicki Cardwell won in 1983 and, after more than two years of determined training under the eye of her coach, Lionel Robbards in Sydney, takes undisputed possession of the world No. 1 position she made her target during the women's world championships in Sydney in 1990.

Horner, 30, and now unsuccessful in three national finals and two British Open finals, defeated three of those young Australians this year but seemingly left her best squash in the semi-final on Sunday, in which she beat Sarah FitzGerald after trailing 2-1 and 5-1 in the fourth game. "I'm not really sure how I got out of that," Horner said after completing victory by 10-9, 6-9, 0-9, 9-6, 9-4.

Martin, who did not drop a game through the tournament, was given her toughest test in the semi-final by the former national champion, Sue Wright, who was hampered by the after-effects of flu but fought hard before going down 9-2, 10-9, 10-8.

Last night's men's final was between the two top seeds, Jansher Khan, of Pakistan, the holder, and Chris Dittmar, of Australia.

RESULTS: Women: Final: M Martin (Aus) bt S Horner (Eng), 9-7, 9-0, 8-4.

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Answers on page 44

Rangers await double celebration

By RODDY FORSYTH

AS RANGERS prepare for tomorrow's crucial game against CSKA Moscow in the European Champions' League, they are aware that, in the space of 24 hours, they could be confirmed as champions of Scotland for the sixth time in seven years and take their place in the European Cup final for the first time. Both events, however, depend upon the efforts of others — namely, Partick Thistle and FC Bruges.

Thistle will meet Aberdeen in a rearranged Premier division match at Firhill this evening and, if Aberdeen drop a point, the title — which has

been Rangers' by acclamation for some weeks — will be retained at Ibrox. Bruges must also achieve at least a draw against Marseilles in the other Champions' League match in Group A if Rangers, who also have to beat CSKA, are to go on to meet AC Milan in Munich on May 29.

"We have to concentrate solely on our own game and leave the calculations and possibilities to everyone else," Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, said yesterday. "All of these things are peripheral because we could beat CSKA and still go out of the European Cup undefeated — but, if that happens, it can say that our players will have done

everything we could have asked for."

Rangers' resources are in better shape than they have been for most of their fixtures in the Champions' League. Goran, Robertson, Gough, McPherson, Steven, McColl and Durrant are all fit and will start and, apart from the long-term casualties, Stevens and Nisbet, only Mikhailichenko is ruled out by injury whilst Hazeley is still suspended.

CSKA's state of readiness will not be known until they appear at Ibrox at lunchtime, but news from the other fixture does not appear to favour Rangers. Bruges were easily beaten 3-1 by Cercle Bruges in a derby game on

Friday night and the Bruges coach, Hugo Broos, yesterday described his team as "appalling". Broos ordered extra training sessions on Saturday and Sunday, but the play

backfired when Lorenzo Staelens, the midfield player, was injured during a practice game.

In addition, the Dutch forward, Foeke Booy, is unlikely to play against Marseilles while van der Heyden is unavailable in midfield because of suspension. By contrast, Marseilles' Belgian manager, Raymond Goethals, cancelled his team's weekend practice matches to protect injury victims Franck Sauze and Didier Deschamps.

Aggressive Bruno says
he will be champion

IT DOES not matter what the rest of the world thinks, Frank Bruno is certain he will be world boxing champion this year. There is no doubt in his mind that he will beat Lennox Lewis, the World Boxing Council champion, in September (Srikumar Sen writes).

Bruno said yesterday at a press conference at the NEC, Birmingham, to publicise his bout with Carl "The Truth" Williams there on Saturday, that his meeting with Mike Tyson had helped him to see his capabilities more clearly.

Tyson stopped Bruno in five rounds but was also hurt by the Londoner, and Bruno

said: "Tyson helped me to grow up. I'm back with a mission to be the heavyweight champion of the world. I'm looking forward to the fight with Lewis. I want to do some damage to him."

George Francis, Bruno's trainer, said: "Since he has become his own boss he has changed completely. He is more aggressive."

Colin McMillan, the British former WBO featherweight champion, has tested negative for the HIV virus. In September, McMillan fought Ruben Palacios, of Colombia, who was last week diagnosed HIV positive.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 3076

ACROSS

- 1 Overseas (6)
- 5 Stand-in (6)
- 8 Despatch (4)
- 9 Just married (5-3)
- 10 Rough drawing (6)
- 12 Barrel ring (4)
- 15 Make too much of (4-9)
- 16 C P - novelist (4)
- 17 Agreement (6)
- 19 Rail sleeping car (5,3)
- 21 Thrash (4)
- 22 Improved (6)
- 23 Relegate (6)

DOWN

- 2 Balance costs/revenue (5,4)
- 3 Elderly (3)
- 4 Not hurt (2,2,4)
- 5 Sunrise (4)
- 6 Reality loser (9)
- 7 Foot digit (3)
- 11 Ejected (6,3)
- 13 Watchful (9)
- 14 Pressed into (8)
- 15 Smudged (4)
- 18 Beer (3)
- 21 Hobo (3)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 3075

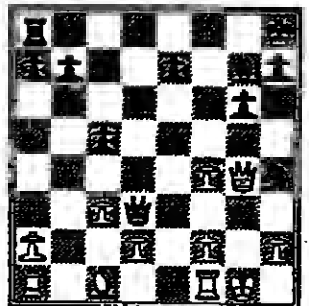
ACROSS: 1 Cardboard city 8 Traps 9 Cranial 10 Woo 11 Ovine 12 Volcano 14 Homely 16 Narrow 20 Quaffed 23 Fruit 24 DNA 25 Impasse 26 Bwana 27 Knowledgeable
DOWN: 1 Cut to the quick 2 Realism 3 Boswell 4 Al-cove 5 Drawl 6 Ibiza 7 Yellow with age 13 Car 15 Elf 17 Aftable 18 Rhubarb 19 Addend 21 Appro 22 Fusil

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WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

This position is from the game Ivanov — Benjamin, US Championship 1992. Queen and knight are well known as being a potent attacking force. How did black utilise their capabilities to the full here?



Solution on page 44

WORD-WATCHING

By PHILIP HOWARD

BIBLICALS

- JEBUSITES
a. A fanatic sect of Sadducees
b. The sons of Japheth
c. Original inhabitants of Jerusalem
LAMECH
a. A descendant of Cain
b. A descendant of Seth
c. An enemy of Samuel

CANDACE

- a. Mythical land over the Jordan
b. A Christian convert
c. Queen of Ethiopia

MALCHUS

- a. An apocryphal prophet
b. Servant of a high priest
c. A companion of Paul